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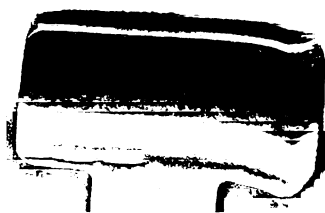
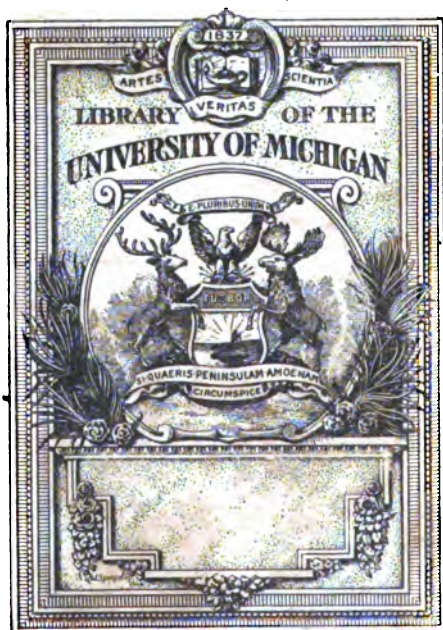
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, THE
SAINT PAULS MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1873.

MR. CARINGTON.

CHAPTER XXI.

A QUEER SUPPER PARTY.

"Conspirators may sup as well as Emperors,
And with about an equal appetite."

DRURY LANE had not seen so great a sensation since it last was burnt down, as the appearance of two gentlemen in the box of the mysterious lady known as Lily Page. A dramatic critic who happened to have a stall, rushed out, chartered a hansom, and sought his editor in Fleet Street. That illustrious journalist, though just giving directions as to a leader to be written on the imminent probability of a European war, thought this matter so much more weighty, that he drove off to the theatre at once. There was the heroine of the hour, attended by two cavaliers: and Mr. Thornleigh, accustomed to interviews with ministerial people, recognized Conyers at once. But who was the other? Mr. Thornleigh was sure he had seen him somewhere. Mr. Carington's, as we know, was not public but social distinction; he was not a man to be seen at the House, or at race-courses, or even at fashionable parties on a vast scale; those who got him to their smallest and choicest gatherings, deemed themselves fortunate.

The editor went into the saloon to see if any lounge could yield him information, and was lucky enough to meet an old acquaintance, an attaché detached, a novelist, spiritualist, journalist, and a dozen other things of ist-ending, a man as brilliant as a meteor, and as mad as a March hare. Him accosting, the secret was out at once.

"That's Carington," says Roderick Deseret.

"The Carington?"

"The same. I suppose the girl's his mistress. He has only just come back to London, I hear, which would account for her going about alone. Isn't she handsome?"

"A stunner. Pity we can't find out more about her. A virtuous yet suggestive leader would be just the thing for to-morrow. There's nothing in the telegrams except war rumours, and our readers much prefer a scandal."

Ah, Mr. Thornleigh! What if you could have followed the mysterious party to the Red House?

As Mr. Carington escorted Paulovna down the staircase of the theatre to her carriage, they attracted everybody's gaze. It was not only that Lily Page, the Incognita of the moment, had found a cavalier, but that he himself, looking young, through the power of spirit and style, and health of body and mind, was clearly a man of distinction. As they plodded downwards he was talking to her very seriously, still in Romaic: and when he placed her in the brougham, he said,—

"My friend and I will be with you in an hour. That will give Demetrius time to prepare. The Prince must join us, you know: and according to the temper in which I find him, will be the advice I give you. Adieu for an hour."

Paulovna drove away. Mr. Carington took Conyers's arm, and strolled with him into Bow Street, having ordered his brougham to wait for them. The night, though cold, was starlit and pleasant.

"Well, Conyers," he asked, when they got beyond the bustle of carriages and cabs, "what do you think of Lily Page?"

"Very charming, and very odd. How came you to be so intimate with her? Is she—well—what people say she is?"

"Not a bit of it," said Mr. Carington. "It is my belief, Conyers, that if I, in the immediate neighbourhood of that lighted police office, were to tell you all I know about Lily Page, and how I know it, you would give me into custody, and telegraph the F. S. to come to London at once, lest it should be blown to imperceptible atoms."

"Ah," said Conyers, "then don't, please. I should like a quiet supper. Besides, you promised me an introduction to some conspirators."

"We'll have a quiet supper with some conspirators; the real thing. Did you notice that black-bearded fellow at the box door? He's a Free Brother."

"The deuce! He looked like Agamemnon when he had made up his mind to kill Iphigeneia."

"He's not a bad fellow, in some respects, but his ambition is to assassinate an Emperor. I don't think he much cares *which*."

"Pleasant man to know," said Conyers. "What's his connexion with this amazing Lily Page?"

"She's a Silent Sister."

"By Jove, she talked enough to you to-night."

"Well, she shall talk to you presently. We are going to sup

with her. Meanwhile, let us lounge into the Albion for a cigar. Perhaps we may see Prince Oistravieff."

They did not, as may be supposed, but they were marked down by Thornleigh and Deseret, who had come in to console each other for the impossibility of getting a leader out of the Lily. Thornleigh, a man of promptitude, thought he saw his opportunity, and came up to Conyers, whom he had often bored at Downing Street. Your Under-Secretary cannot afford to snub the editor of a daily paper, so the two got into a conversation apart. Mr. Carington, who was cooling himself with a pint of claret, guessed what was up, and was quietly amused by his friend's misadventure. But Conyers could take care of himself. Thornleigh's whispered remark, when he came back to his friend Roderick the Roamer, was—

"No go."

"Who's your friend?" asked Mr. Carington, as they entered the brougham to drive to the Red House.

"O, don't ask. He's an editor. He wanted to know something about Lily Page in the interest of morality, and to be introduced to you in the interest of society. If there had been time I'd have invented for him a history of the Lily that would rather have astonished his readers to-morrow."

"He ought to be with us to-night," said Mr. Carington. "I am going to sup in a house of conspirators. You will meet Oistravieff, who has been their victim."

He briefly told Conyers the story.

"I met the Prince, and some of these people, in Russia, a good many years ago. I accidentally saved the life of one of them, at a wolf hunt. That was Demetrius, to whom poor Paulovna was to have been married. She is a marvellously clever woman, you can see; she is a great linguist and quite a brilliant little actress: but I think she has made a great mistake in marrying that rascal of a Prince. Demetrius would have married her at any moment. He is a very quiet fellow, but I doubt him. He will hardly forgive her."

"What do you mean to advise?"

"I shall endeavour to judge this evening. I want to get them all out of the country, so that they may get into no difficulty."

"The best plan. Fools of that sort are a great nuisance in England. They fancy themselves dangerous, when they are only contemptible."

They reached the Red House, and were by Demetrius shown to a well-lighted room, where supper was prepared for four. The Prince and Princess Oistravieff entered: the tall Russian had a sort of sulky civility about him. Coward always, he had been on this occasion frightened to the uttermost: but when he found Mr. Carington and another Englishman in the house, his sanguine

slyness revived, and he began to think the game not quite lost, and thought he would try to outwit his enemies. Once he could get out of their power, he would place himself under the protection of the Russian Ambassador at the Court of St. James's, repudiating a marriage which he considered doubly void, as it was celebrated under compulsion, and as the woman was a mere serf. He had a peculiarly difficult part to play, especially in the presence of a man of Mr. Carington's discernment: but he played it well. Savage as he felt, he never showed his teeth. He behaved to Paulovna in a deferential apologetic way, as if really sorry for a crime which he could not expect her to forgive: he was courteous and subdued, and took a very small share in the conversation. The others were somewhat lively, Conyers being extremely amused at the notion of a conspirators' supper party. Demetrius and Ivan waited at table.

When supper was finished these last left the room. Then Mr. Carington said to Paulovna—

"Princess, this I understand is a supper of business. You wish to decide as to future arrangements between yourself and the Prince?"

"I do," she said.

"I have been told what has occurred, Prince Oistravieff," he went on: "I think there should be a present settlement of affairs. The situation is dangerous. Conspiracies cannot exist in England. What do you propose?"

"I think," said Oistravieff, speaking slowly, "that there should be a second marriage, in public, so that my wife may be recognized. I would willingly persuade her to live with me: if that cannot be I should wish her to live in the position that belongs to the Princess Oistravieff, choosing her own place of residence. That is what I propose."

Paulovna was perplexed by the Prince's mild tone, and liberal way of putting it. Mr. Carington was not at all disposed to think him sincere, but he saw that something must be done.

"Paulovna," he said, "you had better go and consult Ivan and Demetrius on this matter. It is important, tell them, that your association should leave the Red House as soon as possible. The police are sure to find you out. Ask them if you shall accept the Prince's offer: ask yourself if you can live with him or not."

She obeyed.

"Romance in Wandsworth," said Conyers tersely. "This is Wandsworth, I think. The yellow fog we drove through, which made our cigars splutter, smelt of the Wandle; in which stream, I am told, Lord Nelson caught trout."

"You really would like the Princess to live with you?" said Mr. Carington to the Prince. "She is very handsome and very clever, and would do credit to the highest society."

"I do not know what the Emperor will say, but I should wish to make her amends. Do you think they will consent?"

He could not conceal his intense anxiety. As he spoke, entered the Princess, her usually pale face flushed ruddily—she could hardly force herself to speak—the words rose in her fair white throat and seemed to stop there, throbbing to escape. At last she cried,—

"Ivan and Demetrius say that if I am to be Princess Oistravieff I must live with Prince Michael and be his wife—else it will be a shame to me. Shall I do it, Mr. Carington?"

"If you and the Prince," he said, rising, "can live together, it will be well for you both—the best thing possible."

"It shall be so, Paulovna," said the Prince in Russian, taking her hand. At that moment she almost fainted, but Mr. Carington gave her some wine.

Demetrius and Ivan entered.

"What is done is right, I hope," said Ivan. "You wish my sister to live with you, Prince Michael?"

"Yes," he said. "There shall be another wedding at the Embassy. You will be there. Then we will travel together. I am glad to think we are friends at last."

"You had better come back to the Clarendon Hotel with us," said Mr. Carington to the Prince. "But a place should be provided for the Princess early to-morrow; she ought not to remain here."

"I think I know exactly the sort of place," said Conyers. "An old servant of our family has just furnished a house in Brook Street, intending to receive lodgers. She has none yet. I can arrange it quite early in the morning, if you think that would suit the Princess, Carington?"

"Nothing could be better. You must go under your own name, Paulovna. A little diplomacy will be requisite, but you can manage all that, Prince Oistravieff, I am sure."

"I will try," he said.

Mr. Carington gave Ivan and Demetrius a sign to come with him out of the room. They passed into another, a sordid bed-chamber.

"You wish her to live with him, really?" he said to them.

"It is the right thing," said Ivan.

"And you believe he will keep faith?"

"He dare not break it," said Ivan.

"He will if he can," muttered Demetrius.

"Well, let your sister go as early as convenient to this house in Brook Street. Everybody ought to leave this place to-morrow. Ivan, you had better go with your sister, as if you were a courier or attendant. What shall you do, Demetrius?"

"I shall follow Prince Michael."

While this conversation was in progress, Conyers had discreetly strolled into the wide passage to smoke a cigarette, of which he is the

best maker out of Asia. He thought the Prince and Princess would like to be alone. They both wished he had stayed. Oistravieff found it more difficult to be affectionate to Paulovna when they were by themselves, while she, poor girl, was full of doubt as to whether she ought to have obeyed her brother and Demetrius.

It was morning when the party separated. Guess how the Prince felt when the fast trotters from Quartermaine's took him really out of reach of that detested Red House toward the happy purlieus of Bond Street. Guess how Paulovna felt when she threw herself on her bed and wondered what would come of it all. The Prince shuddered at the past he had escaped, the Princess shuddered at the future to which she had bound herself. Neither knew how great a mistake each had made.

Arrived at the Clarendon, the Prince went to bed. Not so Mr. Carington and his friend. It was bright daylight, though so early in the year. Supplies were reaching the hotel. Conyers beheld some lobsters just fresh from the fishmonger's.

"After cigarettes and epigrams," he said, "my greatest achievement is a lobster-salad. Let me make you one, Carington, then we shall have an appetite for bed."

To this dissipation Mr. Carington agreed. All his life he had been ready for a pleasant caprice. As they thus ended the night or began the day, London was just awaking. A half-dressed housemaid came into the room with sweeping apparatus, and recoiled hastily when she saw it occupied.

"What a despatch you'll have for the F.S., Conyers," said Mr. Carington. "You'll be able to tell him who Lily Page is, now."

"Nice wiggling I should get, if the Chief found I'd been supping with Silent Sisters. However, I can tell him Oistravieff's returned, that's a blessing."

"You won't have to sacrifice Gibraltar this time. Indeed, you ought to make the Russian Ambassador apologize for troubling you. Can't they look after their own scamps?"

"I suppose they've got too many," said Conyers. "Do you think this particular scamp will keep his promises?"

"The only safeguard is that he will be afraid to break them. If he plays any trick, his life won't be worth an hour's purchase. It is just a cast of the dice."

"Well," says Conyers, "I must go. That old lady in Brook Street will be just visible, and I can prepare her for the Princess. What do you mean to do?"

"I shall go to bed for an hour or two, then I shall look in upon Paulovna to see how matters stand. And then, if there is nothing to keep me, I shall go back to Delamere."

"O yes, you have been with the Earl. Will he recover? Our people want to know, because of his borough interest."

"He's good for ten years yet, in my opinion."

"I suppose the title will be extinct on his death," said Conyers.
 "Who'll get the estates, I wonder?"

"It is a very pretty problem," said Mr. Carington; "I am trying to solve it. Good-by, old fellow; if I stay in town I'll look in at the Chandos. Mind your despatch about Lily Page."

Conyers, walking down the steps of the hotel, touched a black-bearded man, who bowed apologetically. It was Demetrius Brakinska, on the watch.

Mr. Carington, looking out of window before he took refuge in bed, saw, on the opposite side of the way, a tall fair-haired brown-skinned broad-shouldered man, walking Bond Street as if it were Oregon.

"What a wonderful likeness!" he said to himself.

CHAPTER XXII.

NUMBER ONE AND NUMBER TWO.

Alouette. But who is he, Papa? Is he a Vision, too?

Astrologos. He is the Central Vision, dwelling far away
 Where suns are stifled in the Dark intangible,
 Where constellations periah like a soap-bubble.

Alouette. What an unpleasant creature!

Astrologos. He's the Negative
 Father of all things positive.

The Comedy of Dreams.

MR. CARINGTON, when he had refreshed himself with a light sleep, was as brisk as ever, notwithstanding the conspirators' supper and its dramatic ending, and, as he walked up Bond Street to call on the Princess, those who noticed his easy elastic tread would never have guessed how full of fatigue his last day or two had been. He had that happy faculty of sound sleep which gives a man in his waking hours complete possession of all other faculties. People who cannot sleep well are never wide awake. Dip me in Lethe four hours of the twenty-four, and let me breathe pure oxygen the other twenty.

As he walked along to Paulovna's new lodgings, so luckily provided by Conyers, Mr. Carington revolved in his mind several questions. Would the Prince keep his compact? or would he tell his Ambassador all that he dared, and cause a regular explosion? Mr. Carington had no wish to be disturbed by explosions, having on his mind the momentous affairs of his little friend Elnor. Again, why had Paulovna played the part of Lily Page so long after the Prince had fallen wholly into the trap laid for him? Again, who was that tall stalwart fellow whom he had seen that morning shouldering his way along Bond Street?

Paulovna had been established for some hours in her elegant quarters: and there stood on a table near her a superb bouquet already sent her by Prince Oistravieff. In the girl's countenance Mr. Carington thought he could trace a mixture of exhaustion and excitement, of defiance and terror. She spoke coolly enough, though with evident suppression of her feelings.

"The Prince is courteous," she said, languidly. "Look at those charming flowers. See," holding out her hand, dazzling white as the snow of her own steppes, "there was a ruby ring in it, wrapt in a line or two of Russian verse. Am not I fortunate?"

"You have played a daring game, Paulovna, and you seem to have won it; and now you seem to be sorry for your triumph. It is too late. The Prince appears tamed; you cannot be happy with him, but you may be gay enough, with ample money and pleasant society."

"I hate it all," she said.

"Why you drove about London as Lily Page, very much as though you enjoyed it, and did not even vanish from the scene when you had caught your victim. How was that?"

"Ah," she sighed, putting her white hands before her wild eyes as if to shut out some dire vision, "I am a slave. I am a worse slave than in my wretched childhood, when I belonged to the fiend who is now my husband. I dare not disobey the orders I have received. I am in dreadful fear now, lest I have done wrong by allowing the Prince to leave the Red House: but you frightened us all, Mr. Carington, and if something dreadful happens to me it will be your fault."

"Pooh, Paulovna! what should happen? These things have upset you. Take a glass of wine and go to bed early. You will soon be all right again."

"Never," she said. "O, I am tired of this horrid slavery. Yes, I will risk it, I can speak here, and to you. You know I am No. Six?"

"Yes," he said, "and more than that."

"What more? Tell me."

"O, nothing to excite you. I met No. Two of the S. S. in Paris a few months ago, and she told me you were doing important work in London. That is all."

"But how do you know so much about us, when you are not one of us? It is strange beyond belief, Mr Carington."

"How do you know I am not one of you? Perhaps I am No. One, after all."

He laughed therewith. She shuddered, and said—

"O no, no, no, Mr Carington, you are not that dreadful mystery, I am sure."

"Well, perhaps not. Who is he, Paulovna . . . or she, which is it? of course you know."

"Ah, indeed I do not. There are but two in the world who know. But it was his distinct order which caused me to appear in London as Lily Page, to go driving about, to entrap Prince Oistravieff. I was told to go on afterwards, partly to prevent suspicion, and partly to attract some one else."

"Whom?"

"He was shown me, but no name was told me, and I had not seen him before. He is a tall wide light-haired Englishman, with very blue eyes and very white teeth. I was to have an introduction to him, and to bring him to the Red House. Now what will happen I dread to think; for you have made me disobey, and let the Prince out, and break up the place down there, and I don't know what may be done to me."

"Keep up your courage, child; you are frightened for the moment. Haven't you Ivan and Demetrius to take care of you?"

"What can *they* do, poor slaves? What can anybody do against No. One? No: I must suffer what I must suffer. If I knew beforehand I could bear it: but it is the dread of something unknown that horrifies me. Why, Mr. Carington, one of us, who had disobeyed, was taken out of her bed in a Paris Hotel at dead of night, and drowned in the Seine. I knew it was to be done, yet dared not warn her, though we were at supper together the night before, with some of those who did it. 'You look tired to-night, Paulovna,' she said, as we parted. I did not undress. I went early next morning to the Morgue . . . and there was her body."

At that instant Prince Oistravieff was announced. He had arrived in a superb equipage. Paulovna received him with dignity: Mr. Carington talked for a few minutes, and then took leave.

"I shall see you again, I hope," said Paulovna.

"I doubt it, Madame," he replied. "It is important that I should be in the country in a few hours."

She gave him an imploring look. He smiled meaningly and, as he passed Ivan in the hall, said—

"I go out of town early to-morrow, but your sister wants to see me again. Find out from her when she will be quite alone, and let me know at the Clarendon."

Mr. Carington having nothing to do at this moment, walked briskly on to the Park. He was one of those men who can always think fast if they walk or ride fast. He was puzzled by Paulovna's revelations: for, though accident had given him close acquaintance with some of the secret societies, he had no idea of such desperate deeds as these. A Reign of Terror and of Mystery together is slightly appalling.

"I will go round and look for Conyers at the Chandos presently," thought Carington to himself. "He'll dine with me, I dare say, as nobody's in town, and I can wait at the Hotel for Ivan. How much or how little shall I tell Conyers? These F. O. men are so fussy."

"Who is No. One? That's the great question of the day. I guess, but I can't get proof. If I am right, what a smash he'll come to, one of these days! Such a network of rascality can't last."

He stood still at Grosvenor Gate, lighting a cigar. As he looked up, having successfully accomplished this operation, an open carriage and pair swept through from the Park and turned down the Lane—in it sat a lady, young, ravishingly pretty in a Lilliput style, buried in white fur, with a white Maltese dog as sole companion.

"No. Two, by Jove!" thought Carington. "The plot thickens."

He had thrown away his cigar in his surprise. He saw a small Street-Arab close to him:

"Boy!" he said, giving him a half-crown, "run fast after that carriage, get up behind if you can, stick to it until it stops, and then come back and tell me where the lady gets out. Quick, or you'll lose sight of it. I'll stay here."

The youngster rushed off as none but a London street boy can. Mr. Carington's message had given the barouche a start, but this head-long imp, diving under carts, astonishing horses by sudden appearance from beneath, threading the needle adroitly through groups of ladies and gentlemen, kept it well in sight, and was up behind before the corner had long been turned. The carriage stopped at Grange's, and the lady entered: and the boy looking with admiration through the window at fruit which would have seemed as miraculous to him in July as it really was in February, saw that the lady in white fur was talking to a gentleman in fur equally black. They were not long together: he handed her to her carriage, and her affectionate little attendant jumped adroitly up behind. The horses went on rapidly to Thomas's Hotel, Berkeley Square, and the lady went in, and the carriage was dismissed.

"I hope that bloke's got another bit of silver about him," said the youngster to himself, scampering off towards Grosvenor Gate.

There was Mr. Carington, slightly chilled, but calmly smoking. The street-boy told him his adventure with a graphic brevity quite unknown to the penny-a-liner. He did not forget the white lady's talking to an ugly tall dark man in the beautiful fruit shop.

"Do you know what to do with money?" asked Mr. Carington. "That half-crown, now?"

"Give it to mother," said the boy. "She does charing and I runs errands: and when I've had a good day, O, don't we have a stunning supper of 'ot sassengers!"

"Do you call this a good day?" asked Mr. Carington, much amused.

"Don't I! And it's so jolly cold, I shall just buy some Cream of the Wilderness for mother."

Mr. Carington tossed the boy a sovereign, which he caught as cleverly as a jackdaw catches biscuit.

"Lord, sir," he cried, when he saw gold, "you don't mean it, I know."

"Of course I do. Mind you get your mother a good supper."

As Mr. Carington drove away in a hansom which happened to come up, he saw his street-boy turning in his delight the maddest somersaults.

What had just occurred gave our friend more to do than he expected: but he was most anxious to get out of town and look after Elinor. Driving first to the Clarendon, he noted Demetrius standing a grim sentinel not far off. He signalled him, having dismissed the cab.

"The Prince?" he said in Russian.

"At home."

"Where has he been?"

"To Paulovna. Then to a shop in Piccadilly."

Mr. Carington interrogatively placed two fingers on his lower lip. Demetrius nodded. Mr. Carington walked on to the Chandos Club. Conyers was there.

"Conyers," he said, "is there a messenger here that can be trusted to find a thing out quietly? A fellow who could go to an hotel and ascertain the movements of anyone there."

"I know nobody here, but my groom does that sort of thing beautifully, and he's just round the corner at the mews. I have only ridden down, for the chance of meeting you and making you dine with me."

"That's impossible," said Mr. Carington: "sorry as I am, you must dine with me again to-day, for I have much to tell you. As to the groom, can he get hold of some of the servants at Thomas's, and find out whether the Marchesa Ravioli is at home to-night, and bring word quietly to my room at the Clarendon?"

"He'll do that to perfection," said Conyers, and promptly gave orders at once. "What a mysterious state you are in, old fellow. What is happening? Who's the Marchesa Ravioli?"

"Isn't she known at the F. O.? Faith, you don't know everything. However I dare say you can enlighten me on one or two points as we dine. It will be a scratch dinner again, I regret to say."

As they were about to enter the hotel, Mr. Carington was accosted by a tall man, who said,

"Midnight, sir."

"Right," was the reply.

"Carington," said Conyers, who had caught the words, "are you a Jesuit, or are you a conspirator? Confess."

"I confess I am hungry. Now, John, the best dinner you have at a moment's notice. Next time I come to see you we'll dine every day like Princes."

"I don't so much care about Princes," says John, in a low tone.

"I suppose, Conyers," said Mr. Carington, when they were alone after dinner, and the diplomatist was skilfully rolling cigarettes, and the Mocha was fragrant, "there is not much official information about these Elder Brothers and Silent Sisters."

"What we have is false, as I said before. Last night's adventure would rather amaze the F. S. What's the Prince going to do?"

"He sent the lady a bouquet to-day: and called while I was there, so I suppose it is all right. But from a lot of little circumstances which I cannot yet piece together, I fancy these fools are combining their private plot against Oistravieff with some political plot, working upon Paris, probably. I forget whether I told you that the Brethren and Sisters are known by numbers: No. One being a mysterious entity at the head of both. I should like to find out who he or she is. I feel certain I know, but proof is the point."

Conyers took a pencil and an old envelope, which he tore in two. He wrote a name on one half, and then passed the pencil and the other half to Mr. Carington. The names written were the same.

"We are right, I believe," said Mr. Carington. "Of the Free Brethren I only know two or three, in connexion with the Russian adventure I mention. Of the Silent Sisters I know more, for I had learnt their language of gesture, and have amused myself by detecting them in many saloons of the Continent, and frightening them awfully. Quite by accident I saw No. Two of the S. S. in the Park to-day: she is the lady for whom your groom is inquiring."

"I wish we could grip these stupid societies by the neck," said Conyers, "and put an end to them, from No. One downwards. One could smash up the men, who are all knaves or fools, but the women are the worst. How is that?"

"O, there are two sorts of women who conspire . . . the old and imbecile women who unite conspiracy with superstition . . . the young and flighty women who unite conspiracy with flirtation. Of that second and most amusing sort is Raffaella Ravioli."

Just then arrived Conyers's small but astute groom. He had learnt (in a whisper) that the Marchesa would not return from her evening engagements till one.

"Too late," said Conyers.

"No, my dear fellow, it is never too late for anything. I have often known it too early."

"You will go?"

"Assuredly. I *must* go down to the Earl's to-morrow, and I would not on any account miss this woman. If anything important turns up, I'll drop in at the F. O., and get a glass of that famous Ambassador sherry. Meanwhile, at midnight I must call on that poor perplexed Paulovna."

"It is nearly that, now. I will stroll that way with you. I was glad to be able to suggest a place for her."

"You may as well go in and patronize your old dependent. I shall not be long. Then I shall get some more of your cigarettes on my way to Berkeley Square."

Conyers agreed: and affably drank some brandy-and-water, to the delight of the old lady's heart.

Paulovna seemed gayer, when Mr. Carington entered, than he had seen her for some time. She offered him refreshment, pleasantly saying,

"You must be rewarded for coming to see me at such an hour."

"I am rewarded by seeing you more cheerful. You have thrown away your foolish fears. Now, everything will go well."

"I think it will," she said. "The Prince has been most kind. I almost begin to think I may manage to endure him. Even Ivan is of the same opinion. But do take a glass of wine, Mr. Carington."

"Thanks, I have dined," he said.

"Shall I order coffee?"

"I could not stay." Paulovna's change of demeanour puzzled him. There was about it something strained and false. "I have an immediate engagement at some distance. I leave you with less regret now that you seem likely to be happy. A romantic history may have a noble end. Good-bye, till I meet you again as a Princess."

"Good-by," she said, and taking from her bouquet a scented flower, placed it in his hand. "I shall never forget your kindness."

Mr. Carington threw the flower unthinkingly on the table, for at that moment Demetrius Brakinska rather abruptly entered the room. He was clearly hurried and excited. He said,

"I beg your pardon, sir, but I have a message for you."

Mr. Carington followed him from the room, with a kind word of farewell to Paulovna. She, when the door was closed, sank back in her chair and exclaimed,

"Thank God!"

"Wicked to the end!" said Demetrius in Russian, as they came to the street door. "You were nearly a dead man, sir. She was ordered to kill you, and dared not disobey. If you had drunk her wine or smelt that flower, you'd have been dead by morning. I've disobeyed, and I dare say they'll kill me, and it's the best thing can happen to me."

"Why the devil should they want to kill me, Demetrius?" asked Mr. Carington.

"You know too much, sir."

"Do I? I'll know more to-night. Find a cab, Demetrius. To-morrow I am going into the country, and you shall come with me, to be out of their reach. You can leave the Prince and Princess to themselves now."

"I say," said Conyers, who heard the cab arrive, "are you going to leave me here drinking brandy-and-water all night?"

"Gad, I'd forgotten *you*," said Mr. Carington—"Demetrius, here's my card: take it to the Clarendon, and tell them you're to wait in my room till I come. Come along, Conyers—where shall I put you down?"

"O, I'll go to Berkeley Square with you. I can take the cab home. Do you know, I've had such a lot of affecting reminiscences and brandy-and-water."

"Lovely mixture. I've had neither one nor the other. No. Six is coming round, and feels quite disposed to be a Princess."

"They all like it," said Conyers. "Ah, here we are. Good-night. Don't blow up this unlucky city before morning. I shall dream my pillows are stuffed with Orsini bombs."

Conyers drove off. Mr. Carington walked quietly into the hotel, and said to a servant,

"Has the Marchesa Ravioli returned?"

"She has not, sir. We expect her every moment. Mr. Carington, I think?"

"Ah, William, yes. I knew you at Mivart's. I much want a few minutes with the lady to-night, for I go out of town to-morrow."

He was about to say more, but that instant a carriage drove up, and the brilliant little lady in the white furs alighted, and was followed by her Maltese, which yapped excitedly. Mr. Carington came forward. She knew him at once.

"You here at this hour," she said, "when everybody ought to be in bed. Well, I suppose you must come up. I always take a cup of chocolate the last thing: you can pour it-out for me."

At first sight you might have taken this vivacious lady for twenty: but a close observer would soon discover that she was somewhat nearer forty. Very charming still: forty is no contemptible age, though the chit of "sweet seventeen" despises it. Some folk like jam tarts and others woodcock.

When they had entered the Marchesa's apartment, Mr. Carington said:

"Well, Raffaella: you are charming and silly as ever. Why do you come to England with your ridiculous conspiracies?"

She turned pale.

"You know?"

"Of course I know. No. Six has tried to poison me this evening. Is your chocolate safe?"

"O, Frank!"

"Now, Raffaella, you know me of old. I don't believe you would do me any harm, but you are over here to do harm to somebody."

The chocolate was brought in.

"Pour me a cup," he said—"I'll trust *you*—you are a lady of Florence, and Paulovna is a poor Russian serf. But what are you doing to be mixed up with these fools and cowards? I am ashamed of you, Raffaella."

"So you came here to scold me," she said sharply. "Drink your chocolate, if you are not afraid."

"Afraid! and of Raffaella Ravioli! No. But I am ashamed of her. Raffaella Ravioli is afraid, or she would not come over to do dirty and dangerous work in London."

"And of whom am I afraid, pray?"

Mr. Carington put one finger on his lip. She looked a little scared.

"This chocolate is very good," he said, "but might be improved by the merest touch of white curaçao. May I order it?"

The liqueur came. The Marchesa sipped her chocolate silently.

"Did you go to Grange's to buy fruit, Raffaella," asked Mr. Carington, "or to meet Prince Oistravieff?"

"I suppose there is nothing remarkable in meeting the Prince in Piccadilly. One meets him everywhere."

"It was rather difficult the other day, when he was in a cellar down by the Thames, in mortal fear of the knout."

"O Frank, you know everything. Why do you talk so sharply to me. We are old friends."

"That is why I talk sharply, Raffaella. Now, tell me, who is No. One?"

"I dare not," she said, with a frightened look.

"*Dare* not! *You* dare not! Pooh, you are not the Raffaella Ravioli I knew in Florence twenty years ago . . . the beautiful gay girl that would have dared anything . . . the creature as wild as a falcon and yet as gentle as a dove. I know how you were drawn into this network of rascality. I know who No. One is, and what he will lose if he loses you. Why are you to be the drudge of the greatest impostor that ever dazzled the eyes of Europe? Come, will you do what I tell you?"

"O Frank, when did I refuse?"

"Why, when you married a blockhead. No matter: have you any important business to do to-morrow?"

"O dear: so much." And she took out some ivory tablets, scrutinizing them carefully. "Yes, I must be out at ten: isn't it dreadfully early?"

"Two, which is the time at present, is still earlier," said Mr. Carington: "but if you will tell your servant to put in a travelling box just enough for a few days in the country, you and I will start together. It will be quite like a runaway match . . . and it will be running away from what you ought never to have undertaken."

"O Frank, I couldn't do it. What might happen to me?"

"Nothing, while you are with me. Just think what I desire to rescue you from. Remember that but for an accident I should this day have been poisoned."

Mr. Carington had his way. He got hold of a sensible porter, and made him order a carriage in time to go first to the Clarendon and then to catch the earliest train north. A maid packed enough for the Marchesa's present needs, while the lady herself slept on a couch, a heap of white furs, guarded by her little Maltese. As to Mr. Carington, he went down stairs, and squeezed ideas out of the night porter, to pass the time.

When the time came for starting, and the carriage was at the door, the Marchesa was so sound asleep that Mr. Carington took her in his arms and carried her down stairs and placed her in it. As he did so he thought of the time when in a lovely garden of Florence, fountain-brightened and alive with the spirit of Boccaccio, he had tossed the tiny beauty above his head like a mere baby. She slept soundly to the Clarendon, where Mr. Carington hastily picked up Demetrius Brakhska and his luggage: she slept soundly to Euston, where the giant Demetrius, under Mr. Carington's directions, took her, a white mass of fur, from the carriage to the railway train: and she awoke not till, some fifty miles from London, the sun warmed the carriages with shafts undimmed by fog. As she awoke she rubbed her eyes, and said,

"O dear me! Where am I? Why, Frank, I verily believe you have run away with me."

"Yes, Raffaella. Won't they be puzzled in London to-day? What will No. One say when they telegraph to him?"

"By Jove," thought Frank Carington to himself, "I am glad I gave Rachette that diamond."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LOST LINK.

Astrologos. Cut just one link of the great chain centripetal,
And there's an end of the enigmious universe.

Alouette. Tell me which link, Papa. I'll get my scissors out.
The Comedy of Dreams.

MR. CARINGTON took his runaway as rapidly as possible to the Great Hall of Langton Delamere. He knew that the Earl for two reasons would rejoice to receive her there—one, that he liked pretty women, the other, that he hated the society of which she was a member. The Earl, though in his time rather a loose fish in politics as in other matters, naturally took the fine old loyal Toryism of the

Delameres when he inherited the estates. They had fought for the Stuarts in their time, and even now thought the House of Hanover new-fangled, so the democratic conspiracies of the present day were naturally abominable to them. Delamere, moreover, in his wide wanderings had, like Frank Carington, met specimens of the conspirator-tribe that he did not like. So his friend coolly brought the Marchesa on to Delamere, without giving any notice. She, having once got into Mr. Carington's hands, knew full well it were vain to attempt to escape.

Mr. Carington managed to give her a night's rest on the way, and brought her to Delamere about noon, thinking that just then the young people would be out of the way. His conjecture was right, and he got her in quietly, not seeing even Lucy Walters, and telling a confidential servant to make her rooms ready without a word to anybody. Demetrius he took to his own private apartment, telling him to remain as his personal attendant.

"I don't know what you are doing with me, Frank," said the Marchesa, as she crossed the lofty Hall to the rooms chosen for her. "Is this a prison, or a lunatic asylum, or what?"

"It is the house of a friend of mine, Raffaella. But you are to be a prisoner here, and not let any one know where you are. You shall be a happy little bird, in a cosy cage."

"What if I fly away?"

"O, you won't try. Your wings are clipped. I shall send another little bird to be your companion, and the time will pass gaily enough behind the wires."

"O, I know you, Mr. Frank," she said with an ironic curtsy. "You like to run away with pretty women, and keep them in cages. Send me my mate, and mind you don't leave our cage-door open. We may fly to the moon if you do."

The young people were out on their wanderings, Lucy among the rest. Mr. Carington found the Earl alone, and in remarkable health and spirits.

"Ha, Carington," he said, "so you are not lost. I thought not, though you did not deign to write to me. Have you found Oistravieff?"

"O yes, he is safe . . . for the present." And Mr. Carington gave the Earl a brief sketch of the poor Prince's adventures.

"He was well served," said the Earl grimly. "It is a pity they did not flog him well. And so he is married to this woman. How will it end?"

"I don't know. It is a case of diamond cut diamond—a move in the great game between despotism and the democratic societies. I should have interfered farther, but the Princess was ordered to poison me, and tried her best, so I came away."

"They seem to be obedient people in those two societies," said Lord Delamere.

"They are : and the notion of a brotherhood and a sisterhood seems good at first. But men and women move in different cycles—which, by the way, is the chief cause of unhappy marriages."

"What do you mean?" said the Earl.

"It is clear enough. The twenty-four hours of the day might be marked on a dial differently for different people. The common measure is the difficulty. I am most brilliant at four in the morning : what can I do with a friend who culminates at eight in the evening, or with a lady who culminates at kettledrum? There is a great reform needed : people ought to be sent to school to adjust themselves to each other. Blockheads wonder at your saying *Good morning* when with them it is afternoon : they confound noon with midday, unaware that it is simply *nona hora*. For a labourer who gets up at three, midday is noon : for you and me, if we rise at ten, noon is seven, and the proper dinner-hour."

"Well, let us return to our conspirators," said the Earl. "That plan of which you have given me some vague notion, does not succeed, you think?"

"Not for long. The complete isolation and secrecy of the head of the plot is excellent. But the men who rise to the higher grades are resolute unscrupulous fellows, born assassins ; and the women who rise to the higher grades are clever brilliant women, born coquettes. It was for finding this out they tried to poison me : but the discovery has enabled me to inflict upon them a puzzling blow. I have broken a link. Before I explain, will you forgive me for having without leave brought you a lady visitor?"

"I forgive you. If she's pretty and clever, bring her to see me."

"'Tis the old story with you, Delamere. When you are tired of pretty girls, Eden will flow backwards. She's a most fascinating creature, of that uncertain age which men of taste prefer. She is in that suite of rooms where your favourite Huntress Diana stands. I want her to be kept perfectly quiet, and for no one to see her except Elinor."

"Why Elinor?" said the Earl abruptly.

"Because Elinor is my favourite, and is a good girl, and will ask no questions, and endure no gossip."

"Well, I think she is a good girl and a clever one, from what little I have seen of her in the few days you have been away. I had one or two nice little talks with her. Both those young fellows seem to prefer her to my Lucy. But come, who is the mysterious lady?"

"No. Two. I have broken a chief link. She is the only one of the Silent Sisters who has access to No. One, or who really knows who he is, whatever others may guess. Through her all orders pass to the others. She is an old friend of mine : I knew her a mere child at Florence. I found her out as No. Two by a chance gesture

which I noticed at a ball. I saw her in London by the merest accident."

Mr. Carington told the story of the Grosvenor Gate meeting, and the street-boy's promptitude, and all that ensued, much amusing Lord Delamere.

"It was an amazing clever thing of you, Carington," says he.

"Well, I think I have served them out for trying to poison me. With your permission, I should like to keep this little conspirator a prisoner here for a time. I want regularly to puzzle them. Unless I am much mistaken, the people at Thomas's have not the least notion where she has gone."

"Was there no one to watch her?"

"O dear, no. No one dare watch her. She is the head of the sisterhood. The sisterhood will get no orders. No. One, when no despatches reach him, will be in a state of abject terror."

"Not for the first time," said the Earl, "nor probably the last. It is a grand stroke of yours, Carington, and may eventually send the fellows into exile. But is the lady submissive? I am a little surprised at her letting you run away with her. Had it been a younger man, now——"

"When I was a younger man, and she was the prettiest little unfledged rogue in the world, I used to pet her and romp with her. She married a scampish Marquis, who neglected her, but left her plenty of money when he came to some disreputable end, I forget what. Then she was seen in Paris, and got drawn gradually into this ridiculous conspiracy, and by aptitude for subtlety and secrecy, for courage and cleverness, has become No. Two . . . therefore the sole female *confidante* of No. One. If I can manage it, they shall never communicate again."

"Verily I am delighted," said the Earl. "You know how I despise all conspirators, and that conspirator above all others. Keep her here as long as you please. Let Elinor be her companion: I shall want Lucy, of course."

"Yes, and I don't wish her to see Lucy. She is not a child to be trusted with secrets, is she?"

"Difference of education," said the Earl.

"Partly, no doubt. However, I want secrecy. To Elinor I shall tell nothing, except to be secret—and she has never disobeyed me yet. I have a Russian fellow with me, also a conspirator, who can wait upon her."

"Confound it, Carington, we shall all be murdered in our beds."

"Well, there are nice cosy vaults in Carlisle Cathedral—you and I are not of the Bob Acres type."

"You quite think they won't find out where your Marchioness has flown to?"

"Most unlikely—an early train—luggage left behind—nobody

near who would be likely to enquire. Remember No. Two is the practical head of the sisterhood; no one dare watch her."

"It is immensely amusing, Carington. Let her stay here as long as you and she like, but you must let me see her soon."

"To-day, if you like. Now, with your permission, I'll go and see whether those two boys have returned, or have run away with Elinor and Lucy altogether."

"Send Lucy to me, if you see her," said the Earl.

When Mr. Carington entered the Great Hall, he received welcome, for the four young people had just returned from a brisk walk. He looked rapidly at them, and came to the sudden conclusion that Frank Noel was triumphant, Fitz-Rupert savage, Elinor satisfied, and Lucy jealous.

"I don't want that boy's heart caught on the rebound," he thought.

When they had all welcomed him, Frank Noel said,

"I am very glad you have just arrived, for I am called away to Salisbury. The Canon is ill, and wants to see me."

"I fear you have neglected him, Frank," said Mr. Carington. "I hope the illness is not serious."

"The letter was from his man-servant," said Frank Noel, "who is the most unintelligible old fellow I know. I hope there is not much the matter. But I have ordered a trap for the next train, and Fitz-Rupert is going south with me."

"You!" said Mr. Carington to Fitz. "What's *your* hurry? Not an invalid uncle, I'll swear."

"No, but business to be done at the Court," said Rupert. "A new branch railway wants to run right through my favourite conservatories . . . in fact I believe they want to make them a terminus, all the glass being ready. I mean to fight them."

Mr. Carington understood, and intelligently dismissed his young friends, as the omnibus came round to the front. The meaning of Fitz-Rupert's humorous excuses was clear enough.

"Give me early news of Canon Lovelace, Frank," he said as they drove away.

Then he turned to the girls, whom he at once thought he quite understood. He told Lucy the Earl wanted her, and was alone with Elinor in the Great Hall.

"Well, child," he said, "are you glad to see me again? How have you enjoyed yourself? Which of those young fellows is most in love with you, or are you most in love with?"

"How dreadfully inquisitive you are," said Elinor. "Yes, I *am* glad to see you when you don't ask questions. I hope that is a dutiful reply."

"It is your duty to answer questions, Miss Elinor. However, as you talk of being dutiful, here is a chance. I have been away on an adventure."

"O, Mr. Carington—at your age!"

"Yes, at my age—and more fortunate than some young gentlemen. I have brought away the lady, and she is here."

"Now, Mr. Carington! You are joking."

"Not at all, Elinor. She is in the Diana rooms. She is an Italian lady, and I want you to be very kind to her."

"O let me go to her at once. I shall be delighted."

"Don't be impetuous, child. Listen, Elinor—you are a sensible little rogue."

"Thank you, sir," with a demure curtsy.

"No one is to know who this lady is, and as few as possible that she is here. I want you to look after her and be her companion as much as you can, which you won't find difficult, now Frank Noel is gone to Salisbury."

Elinor pinched him.

"What do I care about Mr. Noel?" said she.

"Dear me, how should I know?" asked Mr. Carington. "I have always understood that well-educated young ladies studied every possible subject except—young gentlemen. I think their instructresses quite right to turn their studies away from that slightly fascinating theme. But come, Elinor, I want you to see this lady, the Marchesa Ravioli, and I want you to prevent other people from seeing her—not even your friend Lucy."

"Not even Lucy!" she said in a slightly contemptuous tone. "But this is very mysterious, Mr. Carington. I feel frightened already."

"There is a mystery in it with which you are not to trouble your little head. Can you resist temptation in this way? Can you be in company with a mysterious lady and decline to know from her who she is or what she is, or why she is in this old Hall?"

"I think I can," she said, "I don't care about mysteries much. Shall I go and see the lady now? Of course she is nice or you wouldn't care about her."

"O, Elinor," quoth Carington, "what a piece of self-praise! You know I care more about you than anybody, so how amazing nice you must think *yourself*!"

"I am not at all ashamed," she said simply, "of thinking myself nice because *you* like me. Perhaps I am a little proud that you are kind. I have often wondered what there is about me that makes you care for me at all: and I sometimes think you imagine me a great deal better and cleverer than I truly am."

"I am particularly fond of flattery, Elinor," said Carington, "and you are a most subtle little flatterer. However I may say, my child, what I think I have said before, that I love you because I loved both your father and your mother; and I love you for your own sake, because you are true, and pure, and witty, and wise—the best little girl I know."

"Ah, you flatter too," said Elinor. "And yet—well, I know you are a good judge. I begin to be proud of myself because you praise me."

"Be as proud as you like, child: expand exuberant petticoats, like the peacock. If I find you grow very foolish, I shall have you whipt and sent to bed. Come, let us visit the Marchesa Ravioli, the lady who has run away with me."

They passed from the Great Hall to the Diana rooms. The Ravioli lay on a couch, all white still, and her little white dog flew at them fiercely. Indeed I think he imprinted his tiny teeth on Mr. Carington's calf, but that gentleman did not care about trifles.

"Ah, Raffaella," he said, "do you like your prison? I have brought you a gaoler. This is Elinor. You must obey her orders, and see no one without her leave. Above all, you must not write or receive any letters."

"O dear," said the Marchesa, springing so suddenly from her sofa that her little dog broke into a snow storm of white barks; "I wish I had never learnt to read or write. Reading books and writing letters are so dreadful, they make my head ache."

"What do you like, then?" asked Carington.

"O, thousands of things! Eating, drinking, dancing, riding, driving, flirting. Now tell me, Miss——what—O, Elinor, I beg pardon—tell me, Elinor, when you have read a three-volume novel, what is there in it?"

"That depends on the novel," said Elinor.

"O you innocent child! Why, all you want in your novel is this sort of thing:—

'The Hero. Darling, how I love you!

'The Heroine. Do you really, dearest? So do I.

'The Hero. Our parents are cruel, but . . .

'The Heroine. Yes. Let us kiss each other.'

They kiss in the first volume, and are happily married or unhappily separated in the third. Now, Elinor, tell me the truth, have you never squeezed into five minutes something much nicer than that?"

"Raffaella," said Carington, "don't you be too inquisitive."

"O, but I like what Raffaella has said—I shall call you Raffaella, you know, as you call me Elinor. I am not ashamed of anything I have done. If one lives life well, there is no need to read love stories. Several men have pretended to be in love with me—I have enjoyed the little comedy—there is no mistaking the real thing."

"Ah, then you know it, you naughty girl," said Carington. "Are you hit very hard?"

"I shall not marry without your permission, sir," said Elinor.

"Dear me, what a dutiful daughter! For, of course, she is your daughter, Frank?" said the Marchesa.

"Faith, I wish she was ; though, in truth, she is just as good, and more obedient than many daughters. Only I fear, from what she says, she has fallen in love with somebody without asking permission."

"I remember an old village rhyme," said Elinor, "which I always thought good.

'The girl who gives her heart away
May wish she had it again, some day :
But the girl who has no heart
Gives herself for a raspberry tart.'

Which sort do you think I belong to, Mr. Carington?"

"You are a pert little minx, sometimes, and have given me lots of trouble, you know, which I shall charge in the bill of your future husband."

"But I haven't got a future husband."

"Haven't you? How will the future bill sound?"

'Frank Noel Esq., to Frank Carington, his godfather, debtor.'

"Now, Mr. Carington, you are too teasing," said Elinor. "What do I care about Frank?"

"What, indeed? And what will he say to some of the items?"

'Five hundred sendings to bed, at a shilling each.—£25.

'Two thousand whippings at half-a-crown.—£250.'

"How you tease the child, Frank," interrupted Raffaella, lazily lying on her sofa, and seeing with dramatic eye what easy intelligence there was between Mr. Carington and Elinor. "Why do you tease her? which likes it best; you? or she? Frank, you are just as much a boy now as when you tossed me over your head in those Florence gardens, shocking the statues of the nymphs."

"I hope to be always a boy," he said, "and to be a boy when I enter the next world."

"But was he such a tease so long ago?" asked Elinor. "He sometimes almost makes me angry, never quite. Was it the same with you?"

"I was a little girl," said the Marchesa. "You see I am not very big now. There is such lovely turf in the Ravioli Palace at Florence. He would come behind me as soft as a cat, and catch me by the waist, and throw me over his head: then if I scolded he said nobody could see my ankles unless they were up in a balloon. It was no good to be angry: he *would* be wicked."

"You were a charming little girl, Raffaella," said Mr. Carington, "and those Ravioli gardens will be a picture in my mind for ever. Do you remember climbing that immense orange tree, and having to drop into my arms because you were afraid to come down?"

"I should think I did," she said. "Ah, we are older and wiser now."

"Why, Elinor," said Mr. Carington, "what is that pretty song of yours? It just fits the moment."

Elinor, always obedient, went to the piano and sang:—

"Older, but not half so wise:
Now we have a sense of shame.
Once we played, boy and maid,
Void of thought, a happy game.

"Older, but not half so wise:
Now we have a sense of gold.
Long ago gold might go . . .
Coin might wait till we grew old.

"Older, but not half so wise:
Now we have a sense of sin.
Children fair may not dare
Love and laugh and woo and win."

"That song, Raffaella," said Mr. Carington, "is much to the point, whosoever made it. I suppose there *are* a few innocent folk about, beside you and me and my little Elinor. But really, when one considers the way in which people now advertise their virtues, I begin to doubt it. When folk brag of virtue, it argues a considerable acquaintance with vice."

"Let me sing you a little song," said the lady in white, springing like a white squirrel from sofa to piano.

"I loved once.
Ah me!
I was a dunce,
So was he.

"I loved twice.
O rage!
Two white mice
In a cage.

"I loved thrice.
Vain desire.
One was ice.
'One was fire.'"

At this point a servant entered to ask if the Marchesa Ravioli could receive the Earl of Delamere.

(*To be continued.*)

ART IN THE HIGHER ALPS.

IN several London newspapers the collection of Alpine paintings, by M. Loppé, lately to be seen in the rooms of the Alpine Club, has been warmly welcomed as a contribution to our knowledge of scenery of which English climbers are fond to claim the discovery, if not the monopoly. But it was clear that in many instances, the patriotic press desired rather that our sympathy with Alpine "derring-do" should be roused, than that we should learn any lessons, or enjoy any delights of art, while staring at the terrors of glacier and aiguille. That there is little original or intelligent appreciation of art in the London world is sufficiently manifested by incidents of the yearly promenade before the products of the English palette in Burlington House, and by the popularity and purchases which so heavily weight artists, who might if independent do better than work at the will of their public. This is a hackneyed complaint, which does not make it the less real, and probably no pains in criticism, no exhortation or remonstrance will develop the sense of what is noble and beautiful in form and colour, in our multitude who profess culture and possess the omnipotence and omniscience that goes with unlimited wealth. Yet apart from their interest as the happy hunting-grounds of Long Vacation athletes, the artistic treatment of scenes hitherto, and perhaps prudently, deemed beyond the range of painting, deserves some serious attention. Two pictures of M. Loppé's, who has offered them for the first time this year to the Fates of the Royal Academy, are hung so that there is little hope they will be carefully studied; there is the more reason to attempt some account of the forty-six paintings to which his comrades of the Alpine Club have given the best hospitality they could offer, if not a perfect light.

Once the old superstitions concerning the "Montagnes maudites" of central Europe had been dispelled, and reverends, professors, college youths and muscular spinsters, had upset Chamouny traditions, a sort of contempt set in for the bergschrunds, séracs, and couloirs that used to give harrowing interest to Alpine adventure. With the conquest of the Matterhorn, set in reaction. The dragon of the Alps has been bridled with convenient "garde-fous," and so there remains no blue riband for climbers at the disposal of the fourth estate. The highlands of Asia are beyond our sympathies. Oxford and Cambridge can have no race for them, nor are they within thrilling distance when "fatal accident" in large type gives to the aspirant for Alpine honour the fullest glory that the *Times* can bestow. But though the Alpine summits be a conquered territory, and all the renown to be got out of them be stale and unprofitable, yet the delight in highlands which belongs to our race and its kindred races is not less, and there would appear by the increasing company that take their pastime in such high places as they

may attain, some survival of love for the "upper floor of the world" whence we came. What better revives sufferers from the fatigues of commerce, science, or literature, than the nimble air now within forty-eight hours of London gases? Those who are tired of amusement do not equally appreciate it. They seldom do more than gape from their big hotel at the silver crests and cloud wrack that bound the local view. But the intoxication of the glacier, the enthusiasm of height, is known to those who best deserve to know it. It needs no apology. It is a healthy reversion to Aryan instinct.

But while the upper world gives, it also demands power from its visitors. Physical fatigue attacks the body, which must not seek rest in the region of frost-bites. Nature is inhospitable to those who visit her laboratory where are prepared the rivers and still pastures of the plain. The calm which is required for exercise of the imaginative and creative faculties is disturbed by the complete novelty of all circumstance. When a stray artist wanders above the snow-line a thousand strangenesses perplex him. He sees, but he cannot assimilate what he sees. The strain on his powers prevents thought except of his best path among the translucent but terrible crevasses and the shattered rocks. The desire of his eye is to take in the meaning rather than the beauty of what is around.

In most records of Alpine discovery there is therefore singular silence touching the pictorial aspects of the higher levels. More thoughtful climbers have interested themselves in the scientific truths of glacier action and rock formation. Meteorologists have weighed the air, and counted the speed of the 'tourmentes' that rage around the battered crests of the upper ranges—but there has been little said of the forms and colours of those primæval landscapes, which might have belonged to earth as it was during the second 'day' of creation.

No doubt the artist-perception under the most favourable circumstances is rare among us, and when our travellers affect it in new scenes they often fall into silly detail or sillier rhodomontade. It is needless to add that there have been in English literature perhaps the noblest of all descriptions of mountain form, but the beaten track of criticism is rarely left without speedy blundering by ordinary Englishmen. Books abound on glacier theories, on the origin of protogine aiguilles and calcareous crests; there is a whole literature, philosophical and sportive, about the great European range, but of our countrymen Mr. Ruskin stands alone in conscience of its relation to the human imagination. He has given voice with eloquence to those sympathies by which it is brought within the region of art and the possibility of pictorial expression—but with an eloquence that is by its fulness depressing and even hindering to the artist, the limitations of whose palette and canvas must be considered in his effort to express Alpine scenery.

The calm but equally earnest language of De Saussure expresses within a narrower range the influences of the higher landscape as he

saw it from the Aiguille du Gouter. But the sort of fear with which he, the first intellectual explorer of the glacier zone, was inspired, checked in him the secondary and more personal perceptions possible to those who are familiar with such scenery, and which give birth to pictures, written or painted.

A sufficient acquaintance for art purposes is, however, rarely attained with the livid summits of perpetual snow and the grisly sierras of tempest-shattered rock, for study of their proportions whether of colour or size, for measurement of distance and judgment of the novel conditions of the thin atmosphere. In the dull light at great elevations the plains below are seen as in eclipse, between lurid clouds unbrightened by the filtered sunshine that gives whiteness to them when they are above us. Checking our free reception of facts external to us at these heights is, besides, a weight of self-consciousness. Little if any responsive life helps us to confront the vast phenomena, so that they are heavy to bear. Space inebriates the imagination, as the thin air excites the nerves. To Saussure it seemed as if he had survived the universe and that its corpse lay stretched before him.

We must not therefore wonder that Alpine climbers seldom balance their intellectual and muscular faculties sufficiently for due exercise of their imagination, if by chance they possess a sound imagination capable of witnessing to truth. Meantime, the London public is not unacquainted with artists who profess to tell on canvas the mountain handiwork of God. Fireworks of the palette, green, lilac, and orange have lit up toppling peaks and feather-bed *névé*, for the edification of Piccadilly and Pall Mall. But if curious as studies of the Unknowable, they are not true, which is after all a capital defect. Truth is a first and last necessity when scenery is altogether unlike that with which we are familiar. Whimsical fantasies on light and shade, and on cool or warm greys, and greens, cannot be tried except on hackneyed landscape. Yet nowhere has truth been more flagrantly insulted, than in the representation of the ice world. The little daubs in 'gouache,' that abound in Genevan and Interlaken shops, are scarcely more conscientious than some astonishing pictures of the Montanvert and Grindelwald scenery, "painted out of the artist's own head," as children say. But even a dozen journeys as far as the Jardin, might not have corrected their fancies. The man who is not by habit and taste almost a resident in the higher atmosphere, is apt, as even Saussure did, to "trample the snow under his feet, with a sort of anger rather than with any sense of pleasure."

And even supposing him calmly established among ice-cliffs and crevasses with all necessary materials of his art, and a pulse not many degrees over 80, the painter meets difficulties in the merely imitative study of what is around him, that are well nigh insurmountable. Conventionalisms of painting which are accepted as truths more habitually than we like to believe, must be abandoned where blue and white enter largely into a foreground that depends

on the gloom of sky and cloud for its force. Even to the critic it is at first an effort to follow the quietest rendering of such a landscape, and only is it made acceptable by stress of truthfulness, though the effort is abundantly rewarded by ultimate perception of their novel beauty.

The painter of them must be pre-Raffaelite in his simple accuracy, for his public is primitive in its ignorance of the forms and harmonies which he would represent; no dilettantism is possible, no recipes can be applied by cognoscenti who are quite at fault. This is hard on the painter who cannot exist morally or materially without the sympathy of his world; and our eclectic world is crowded with cognoscenti. His patrons are to be looked for in what M. Taine calls "an industrious and learned democracy." Can the artist in love with the difficult mountain heights translate their truths so as to be not altogether in discord with the thought and emotion of his epoch? He undertakes a "tour de force" that seems hardly consistent with the principles and ends of art. Yet there is hope for him in the "industrious and learned democracy." It tends yearly more and more to mountain exploration, and a considerable fraction of its best men passionately love the Alpine ice world and its antitheses to overgrown cities and fat commercial plains. So though his public be small, the painter who can bring that ice-world within the magic circle of human art has his "raison d'être." He informs the developing instinct of its beauty.

If we allow that during the changes of the last fifty years, there has been exaggerated nature-worship; that the mingled cynicism and optimism of the revolutionary epoch which opened on Europe when sufficiently saturated by Rousseau's doctrines, have too high exalted a daisy or blade of grass, still there is no need for controversy on what may be called the Pope *v.* Cowper debate. Improved knowledge blurs old lines of demarcation between man and "nature." The forces of the mountain world, the crystals of the infant glacier and its onward march are germane to us in the methods of their action. The old-fashioned notion that "our love of nature is the measure of our dislike to our kind" should surely vanish as the unity of the human organism with that of the humblest lichen is more fully realized. Possibly the delight or the awe which is experienced in "savage" landscape is a measure of the relief felt in the absence of social discord and misery, but spleenful humour rarely lasts among the mountains if only the climber can forget his literary superstitions about what he ought or ought not to feel. Not alienation but increased sympathy with every manifestation of "nature" comes of that worship specially rendered on the hill tops and high places, which is no new emotion.

De Saussure, first of moderns, claimed the "*Montagnes maudites*" of Savoy as a place where is bred keen and noble delight. Bravais, the comrade of Martin in the chief scientific ascent of Mont Blanc, could not refrain, in describing a sunset from the summit, from the enthusiastic declaration, "It seemed as if an invisible being were

placed on a throne that was fringed with fire, and that angels with flaming wings bowed before him in adoration."

Preaching is a little out of fashion now, except such lay sermons as undo religion and uproot morality, yet as we can never really do without preaching it may be observed that the glacier wildernesses preach not less practically than the grass of the field. "The mind in their solitude," writes Principal Forbes, "becomes capable of seriously entertaining thoughts which in hours of luxury or business would have been instantly discarded,"—a remark so obviously true that it has become a truism; but he adds, which is more immediately germane to M. Loppé's pictures, as to all pictures of the higher ranges, that such scenery "draws forth to daylight the capacities of that dimly seen inward being which now begins to assert its claim to individuality, but which, amidst the busy turmoil of life, might remain a secret and a puzzle even to itself . . . The seeds of a poetic temperament usually germinate amidst mountain scenery." "An influence," declares Professor Tyndall, "seemed to proceed from the scene direct to the soul! the delight and exultation experienced were not those of reason or of knowledge, but of Being. There was something incongruous, if not profane, in allowing the scientific faculty to interfere when silent worship was the 'reasonable service.'" Mr. Ruskin is, as all men know, the "passionate pilgrim" of mountain glory and gloom, but he is perhaps over-penetrated with poetic sentiment to judge calmly the possibilities of painting the landscape he so intensely feels. In such scenery repulsive eccentricity is but too likely to result from the very intoxication of their immeasurable beauty, and, however fashionable in a free-thinking world, eccentricity is intolerable in the solemn presence of the higher mountains.

Yet art must not shrink from sympathy with its epoch. Physical manifestations of the natural laws which are to so many now the final cause, should, when they can be made subjects for painting, be seriously and reverently respected by artists. Yet they must remain true to their mission of teaching by the senses, the harmonies, or in other words, the relative proportions of things perceptible to sense. Hence the prudent, if somewhat timid narrowness, which selects subjects of which by an intellectual process we already know the relations. Yet it is a noble rashness that with widening science would attempt to bring within the limits of art, scenes of which the relations to man and his existence are unfamiliar: rashness as regards popularity, but not any challenge to the true principles of painting.

The attempt then of M. Loppé deserves attention and some patience in considering how far he has succeeded. No other painter combines some qualifications which he possesses as exponent of the snow and ice world. He is senior of the honorary members of the Alpine Club by good right; for the heights hurriedly visited by travellers the most intrepid, have been for many years his habitual sketching grounds. Having served an apprenticeship to Mediter-

ranean and Italian colouring, he turned with preference to the finer tones and gradations of the snow and ice in their manifold aspects, whether under the summer sun on the mountains, or during winter in the lower and cultivated forecourts of the Alps. No living painter has more conscientiously striven to solve the problems of grey and white as expressions not only of light and shade but of colour. Yet the artistic solution of them, is but a part of the task he has set himself. Possibly, his expression of winter scenery, true to the sentiment of the season and the lower Alps, may be most popular, but on the pictures in this class, labour and genius have been expended in less proportion than in his effort to reduce to the proportions of art, the translucent foregrounds, the murky mists, the dark heaven and grisly spine of the upper range.

Extreme accuracy has been his guide, attained by continuous study, which is apparent even though the critic cannot by his personal knowledge verify it. There is speedy consciousness of unreality when it exists even in paintings of unknown scenes, but those most conversant with glaciers may be here content. The hot controversies maintained since Rendu and Forbes certified the motion of the ice cataracts, may be carried on before these studies of curve and cleavage. It is not in the province of art to catalogue dirt bands and number the lines of névé growth any more than to make panoramic maps of the serried mountain crests, but the knowledge of them should be in the artist's eye and memory. They are the foundation on which he rests his interpretation of the evanescent impressions that he puts on canvas, and that he would communicate to others.

In face of M. Loppé's pictures, the question put by sceptics of the wide range of beauty, is of course suggested. As the "Saturday Review" asked apropos of them, "Why take pleasure in the abomination of desolation in the immediate vicinity of Charing Cross?" Traditions of the two Englishmen who in 1741 penetrated the valley of Chamouny armed to the teeth and in mortal terror, must have suggested the epithet. Not a hundred years ago, indeed, the snow valleys were said to exhale poisonous heat productive of fatal torpor. The Isis of the Alps could not, it was believed, be unveiled with impunity in her weird laboratory. For us no superstition hangs about her, yet the strange noises, the perpetual rifting and riving of unseen forces through the still afternoon air, the rush of rocks, "devil's cavalry" Professor Tyndall calls them, curiously excite the imagination, which is, however, perhaps even more affected by the terrible morning silence of spaces confusedly estimated by the inexperienced fancy. The muffled sound of his voice, the dark heaven he had seen above, the ice crags of the Dome du Gouter told on Jacques Balmat, who was first to find a way up Mont Blanc, so that on his return from his first attempt he threw himself silent and stunned on some hay in an outhouse, afraid to see family or friends till he had recovered nerve. Such extreme excitement belonged only to the first

explorers, but a large measure remains for those who visit the glimmering glacier region. If heroes of the merely acrobatic sort dashed its charm for a time, science has corrected their flippant familiarity by opening to us the secret travail of forces that work with an intensity in the higher reservoirs of heat and cold, which we of the plain can hardly guess; and science has increased the multitude which by its simple attrition quickens emotion. The forms of the crystallized water and the plain-making aiguilles have become instinct with life and "sweet reasonableness" to us as their laws have been traced. The intellect recognises in them noblest manifestations of the eternal order. May not art further discover to us the visible harmonies of this order, and so be in this matter, as ever, the friend and complement of science?

Many years since Mr. Ruskin expressed a hope that some first-rate artists would attempt to paint snow, not in its winter aspect and somewhat vulgar expression of dull and cruel opposition to life—but as it is seen under warm light. "Its curves are of inconceivable perfection and changefulness; its surface and transparency alike exquisite; its light and shade of inexhaustible variety and inimitable finish, the shadows sharp, pale, and of heavenly colour, the reflected lights intense and multitudinous, and mingled with the sweet occurrences of transmitted light. No mortal hand can approach the majesty or loveliness of it, yet it is possible, by care and skill, at least, to suggest the preciousness of its forms and intimate the nature of its light and shade: but this has never been attempted; it could not be done except by artists of a rank exceedingly high, and there is something about the feeling of snow in ordinary scenery which such men do not like. But when the same qualities are exhibited on a magnificent Alpine scale, and in a position where they interfere with no feeling of life, I see not why they should be neglected as they have hitherto been, unless that the difficulty of reconciling the brilliancy of snow with a picturesque light and shade is so great that most good artists disguise or avoid the greater part of upper Alpine scenery, and hint at the glacier so slightly that they do not feel the necessity of careful study of its forms." The critic might have added that few artists have constitutional strength for the necessary studies at great heights, and still fewer have the courage to face unpopularity and pursue beauty that holds forth empty hands to her votaries. The English public is timid. It seldom buys according to its own sense of truth and beauty, which, indeed, is hardly capable of walking without leading-strings. We all know how artists are kept to styles and subjects in which they have made a notorious "hit," and so they turn round and round in their "professional fairy land," a land of impossible effects, tricks of colour, "ficelles," and general unreality that could hardly have existence were it not for the complacent know-nothingness of our monied cognoscenti.

Yet for a' that and a' that, there is an increasing class to which the ice world of the Alps, the summer pleasance of Europe, is an ever-flowing fountain of awe and delight, and the first true painter of

its beauty cannot surely fail of that greeting without which possibly art has little right to exist. As yet, unhackneyed and undebased by ignoble association, the wilderness lifted mid-way to heaven between the three great countries, France, Germany, and Italy, surely merits the touch of art. The value of the Alps, and especially of their wilder recesses as a place of spiritual retreat from the bustle and discord of the European plain, is yearly more felt. Different powers, both of soul and body, are brought into play in these desert places, and if the conceit be admissible, it may be said that the Edel-weiss is but typical of the white thoughts that blossom for those who climb the heights and rejoice in them :

“—since to look on noble forms
Makes noble, through the sensuous organism
That which is higher.”

But it is allowable to sympathise with the first despair of the artist when he confronts the multiplicity in unity which meets him at every turn of these vast prospects. The serried pines that hang like a mantle on the mountain spurs, even the crowding blossoms eagerly pressing up the slopes, confuse by their multitude, that is always, however, subservient to the upper height and its impression on the imagination. The clear atmosphere forbids the aid of smudge and scumble, and requires sleight of drawing not easily or hastily acquired. Truth cannot be sacrificed to expediency without such miscarriage of art as has befallen even Calame, the chief master of the Swiss school. To attain popularity he attempted too much, for great modesty and self-forgetfulness is necessary in any attempt to express the sentiment excited by mountain prospects of the higher sort. St. Preux's feeling, often quoted as it is, is so true that it may bear one more repetition : “*Les méditations*,” he writes to Julie, of the Alps, “*y prennent je ne sais quel caractère grand et sublime, proportionné aux objets qui nous frappent, je ne sais quelle volupté tranquille qui n'a rien d'âcre et de sensuel.*” Yet, in this sanctum sanctorum of purified delight in beauty, unhappily the travelling artist even of the better sort, eager to “do something” that will give vent to his first gush of admiration, falls into the picturesque, worst enemy of Alpine art. He clothes the scene with Scotch or Welsh air, caricatures the yellow gleams on pastures of the middle height, puts brown water in glacier brooks, and highland mosses to strengthen his foreground, and invents another studio landscape, only less composed and balanced than the average. Swiss scenery, in its ordinary expression on the walls of our picture bazaars, is a pain, and the genius has not yet come who can combine perpetual snow and foreground cultivation as is commonly attempted.

And if the painter, full of memories of this or that salon, find the outskirts of the great mountains bewildering—even a Quixote of the brush may be abashed when, physically tired, dazzled by reflected light so that he is chiefly conscious of darkness, and confused by new

form and colour, he finds himself, we will suppose, in the second stage of the Mont Blanc ascent, nearing the Grand Plateau, or threading his way through the ice-fall of the Col du Géant. His recipes of colour and effect cannot serve him; yet strength and time forbid his studying the landscape as a conscientious student. It would require a fresh education of eye and brush. Favourite "vehicles" will not serve him in his attempt to render symphonies of blue and white without help from "warm" foreground and conventional skies. The painter of these pure forms of water, these masses of translucent crystals, these veined cliffs of colour in which all that is most beautiful in sky and cloud is concentrated not only apparently but truly, must be sufficiently master of his art to play as it were on one chord. It is noteworthy what can be done by the simplest combinations of colour when the laws of light are faithfully obeyed; and it seems best in dealing with glacier aspects to avoid foregrounds in earthy and violent contrast. Lovely as are the rosy slopes of rhododendrons seen against the *mer de glace* at the Montanvert, they are disappointing in art, and a certain incompatible heaviness vexes the eye when incidents of the lower valley are employed to enhance the ideal loveliness of the summer snow.

As mere antitheses of colour, sunsets and sunrises in the glacier world are temptations, only, however, to be yielded to with reticence. The combination of aerial glory and the deathfulness of the livid snow is almost too obvious an appeal to particular emotions. There is already excess of all that can excite awe and surprise in that region of which the terrible beauty has been described by Mr. Ruskin: "The glory of its aspect fades into blanched fearfulness, its purple walls are rent into grisly rocks, its silver fret-work saddened into wasting snow—the storm-brand of ages is on its breast, the ashes of its own ruin lie solemnly on its white raiment."

One important title to our respect for M. Loppé's work is the evident delight he took in it. While he did not neglect the singular beauty of the Margälin See, or the wild discord of the Zermatt ranges, his chief field has been the Mont Blanc district. For several reasons the venerable chief of the Alps appeals most directly to the imagination. It is most colossal in detail of spur and ice-fall, and noblest in the very monotony of its buttresses, the folds of its pine forests, the curves of its glaciers. The awe of its livid wildernesses, the breadth of its sunstricken slopes, affects us most.

Still the levels of the Aletsch Glacier in his picture of the Jungfrau, the vast fields of the Gorner ice in the Monte Rosa group, are specimens of M. Loppé's skill, not only in rendering noble impressions, but in managing perspective by extraordinary gradation of tone. The modulation of colour by which he has helped our inexperienced eyes to judge of these snow distances is rare now-a-days, when surfaces in landscape are left as bare as so much coloured paper. The difficulties he has conquered may be gauged by the failure of photography, probably most complete in the higher Alpine scenery, of which it cannot express the leading truths.

It is not within the aim of these remarks to discuss M. Loppé's studies, however courageous in their truth, which are but subservient to his higher work. The unpleasantness of one or two among them is partly explicable by some of the preceding observations. His rhododendrons, however faithful, are somehow inharmonious, as are always flower foregrounds, when accessory to the upper snows. There may be charming studies *in situ* of the flowers, but the sentiment dominant in such is incompatible with the sentiment of the higher ranges. The artist who, by eight ascents of Mont Blanc and innumerable excursions of yet more ambitious mountaineering, has learned the secrets of wider vision, is best employed when he tells them to his public, and only uses flowers as quite subsidiary incidents of his foreground.

M. Loppé's winter pictures are products of his study of snow in all its effects. They read lessons of composition and faithful work to those who manufacture pictorial furniture, but they are only padding to the main interest of his work. His painting of the Lake of Lucerne, transparent in winter sunshine, his grim study of Sixt in its winter pall, are clever and interesting in their management of greys, but his right place is among the exquisite lines of glacier cleavage, keen as sword-edge, yet noble in their sweep as befits the mountain form that they express. They suggest crowding thoughts that need not here be catalogued, any more than the emotions roused by effects of light at sea may be. While the temptation to overpaint the contrasts of sunset and sunrise is confessed, it cannot be denied how they are intensified in beauty on the vast snow-slopes so sensitive to aerial colour. The very ground beneath our feet flushes and dies in response to the sun, and the livid ice in shade adds to the glory of the higher clouds, until the sense of it becomes almost oppressive. A hint—and little more is possible to art—of such a scene is given in a little picture of M. Loppé's, that is called "Sunset from the Summit of the Aiguille du Gouter," even better than in some of his more ambitious efforts to seize the indescribable effect. Small as it is the picture has evidently been a favourite child of his. The depth and purity at once of its colour is a good example of his work.

Some may read these words who mean this summer to pay or renew their due homage to the Alps. Their impressions will be at once strengthened and corrected if they have given an hour's intelligent study to the pictures at the Alpine Club. Their delight will be increased and more intelligent appreciation secured of what, indeed, is at first sight too often confusedly wondered at. It is surely time to educate the eyes that look on the beauty of the perpetual snow, lest in its highest manifestations they "miss the sight of what they do not know beforehand to be visible." No such means of education in the noble and pure beauty of glacier scenery has been yet offered to our mountain-loving world, as in this exhibition of M. Loppé's work.

M. C. O'CONNOR MORRIS.

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BY MOORFIELDS DAISY BROS.

THE FIRST LOAD.

"Now, then! how much longer do you girls intend to keep us waiting!" exclaimed Mr. Jemmy Sparrow, standing up on the box of his uncle's old barouche, and flourishing his whip at the second-floor windows of one of the handsome houses in Harley Street. Over the brass rim of the muslin blinds of each of those windows a bewitching lacy-floral scrap of a bonnet, with a laughing face underneath it, appeared from time to time; first one at one window, then another at the next window, then one at each; and then they vanished. There was a further interval with no signs.

"Will those last finishing touches *never* come to an end?" ejaculated Mr. Jemmy, as he gave his lash a twirl in the air, and plumped down upon the box-seat so heavily that he made the barouche leap up behind, like a boat when a sudden wave skeels under her stern.

"Hillo!" shouted his uncle Mathew, who had resigned himself to a doze in one corner, like an old stager who knew what young girls are capable of; "Hillo! I say, do you want to break my springs, Jemmy—confound you! The girls will be here directly."

"Will they?" said Mr. Jemmy; "doesn't look like it!"

Mr. Mathew Streete Sparrow, the stoutish, middle-aged gentleman in the buttoned-up drab great-coat and drab wide-awake, who was leaning back in one corner of "a sort of not-of-the-newest" family carriage, was an old bachelor of independent means, derived from a good business as a corn-factor, well known for many years on the Corn Exchange. But he had lately retired and invested his money in houses, situated in what he regarded as the most picturesque parts of London. The impatient gentleman on the box was Mr. James Streete Sparrow, his nephew, the proprietor of a nice business in the shape of a handsome pottery warehouse, connected with a factory in Stourbridge. He was also the heir to his uncle's estates in Paddington Green and Primrose Hill—the most picturesque parts of London, as previously observed. He was very fashionably dressed as to the cut of his clothes, but they were all put on and worn so carelessly that he presented a most untidy, not to say loose appearance. He would have been handsome but that his nose was rather too large, and one eye much damaged from a fight he had at school, from the

effects of which his face in other respects also had never recovered. But he was very "popular" with all his male friends, and yet more so with the fair sex; very brusque, but of a truly kind and generous nature; rather fond of wine; very fond of horses, an indifferent-good horseman, and not altogether a bad whip.

In the other corner of the barouche sat a lady of some forty years of age, with a most pleasing countenance of that kind which seems to possess a latent or inward smile derived from habitual goodness of the human heart. She was fair, and handsome, and sat folded up in a lavender silk mantle, without the remotest sign of impatience. This was Mrs. Silverley, widow of Major Silverley; and one of the laughing faces in the bewitching scrap of a bonnet that just now looked over the blind at Mr. Jemmy Sparrow, was her only daughter, aged eighteen. And a very charming production of that number of summers' and winters' growth, she certainly was. This was Mrs. Silverley's house. The other pair of eyes that had beamed down upon Mr. Jemmy, belonged to Miss Glasscut, a bright, spirited girl who had been the schoolfellow of Miss Silverley, and was now on a visit there.

The door of the house was suddenly opened. "At last!" said Mr. Jemmy. The door remained open. A servant stepped forth, and stood ready to attend upon the young ladies. But he was called in hastily, and the wind slammed to the door. "See there now!" ejaculated Mr. Jemmy, "they've forgotten something! Ran upstairs again!—I heard them!"

While matters were in this state, there stepped up to the side of the carriage a very precisely-dressed young gentleman, of most grave and staid demeanour. He had small dark eyes, half-closed, in one of which he wore a smoke-tinted eye-glass. He had a nose finely turned up at the tip, and a small, pointed chin. He raised a very small, very low-crowned, and very tight fashionable hat, and saluted Mr. Mathew Streete Sparrow and Mrs. Silverley, in the barouche, by saying in a drawing, not affected, but rather solemn tone, "Madam, good morning!—Sir, the same to you," and "Ah, Jemmy!" to his friend on the box. This was young Mr. Glasscut, clerk in a London bank, with a fair salary—quite as much as he was worth—and not without "expectations" from a maiden aunt. It was his sister who was upstairs, and seemed never coming down.

At this instant, however, down came the girls, the front-door flying open, and they both flying down the steps, and up into the carriage. Mr. Glasscut mounted beside Mr. Jemmy on the box. The whip slashed the air overhead, and away they went!

Whither? To a Pic-nic in London!

THE REST OF THE PARTY.

Now, be it understood that Mr. Mathew Streete Sparrow had for

some considerable time brooded over one idea, which he had picked up in Pimlico, while taking a "constitutional." His notions of the picturesque, it has already been seen, were peculiar. Not that he deceived himself about Paddington Green, or even about the Hill at Hampstead, where no living human being ever saw a primrose (hence its name, from a perversity quite common in local nomenclatures), but the thought had frequently presented itself that if any set of people happily constituted and disposed, entertained a real fancy for a Pic-nic, that delightful pastorality might easily be obtained without the proximity of a single sheep, or grazing cow, or woodland scenery;—in fact, that it might be very well managed in the suburbs, nay, in the very heart of London. All you wanted was a house with a green lawn at the back, having an old mulberry or walnut-tree, and a bit of shrubbery, enough to "hide your boundaries,"—and the thing was done—or as good as done! And he was right.

But Mr. Sparrow, though a bachelor something past his prime, was fully aware that one of the very first elements of a genuine Pic-nic consisted in the assemblage of a sufficient number of charming girls. And their ages, he considered, ought not to be too much the same, as variety was needed in all respects. He also saw at once the propriety of associating some lady of an uncertain age with himself in this design, in order to give a tolerably correct, though not too rigid a tone and character to the whole proceeding. He had therefore applied to Mrs. Silverley. That lady, after a little previous conversation with Mr. Sparrow, had agreed to share in the conduct and responsibilities of the undertaking. Mr. Jemmy Sparrow, directly his uncle mentioned the matter, very kindly and gladly offered to take the whole of the conduct and responsibilities upon himself; but Mrs. Silverley smilingly shook her head, and his uncle told him he had much better hold his tongue.

The next thing to do was to make up the party, select the place, and fix the day.

Now we have already got Mr. Mathew Streete Sparrow, and Mr. Jemmy Streete Sparrow, Mrs. and Miss Silverley, Mr. Glasscut, and his sister. The day had been fixed, and this was it.

The old barouche of Mr. Sparrow, Senr., was now on its way to Dorset Street, Regent's Park, where they expected to see a pony phaeton waiting for them, in which they were to find seated Mrs. Berry, a very pretty young widow lady; Miss Lily Robins, a ward in Chancery, aged seventeen; and Master Tommy Tiles, a bright-eyed little chap of the age of ten, about to be sent to Harrow or Eton: his father had not determined which. Having picked up the pony phaeton, the two traps were to proceed to Wimpole Street, there to join another barouche in which they hoped to discover several other persons already seated

and waiting impatiently. Both of the above places were accordingly visited, and at the latter they found the tolerably calm faces of Mr. Brightspire, the handsome young curate of B———; Lieutenant Finch of the rifles, who had a charming tenor voice, and played very badly on the guitar; Miss Townley, a most elegant girl, and Miss Euphemia, her maiden aunt, a most amiable lady, who took the greatest delight in seeing young people happy.

Our London Sparrows leading the way, the pony phaeton following, and the third barouche bringing up the rear, away they started with all the bright airs and vivacities of people who were off for the gypsies of Norwood, the deer of Epping Forest, or the Groves of Blarney. Talking merrily of hares and foxes, and rabbits and stags, they drove at once to the Regent's Park, and after making the rounds so as to pass and admire the colours and odours of the Botanical Gardens, and the sounds (and odours, too,) of the Zoological Gardens—noticing all bits of water with their ducks, and swans, and foreign birds, the happy carriages wheeled off gracefully towards the divine wood of St. John,—if our state of mind may crave pardon for the expression. Arrived at this pleasant and not too densely wooded or shaded locality, Mr. Jemmy led the rural-minded party up this Bank, and down the other, through this long Avenue, and then away along one altogether different, yet with a strange similarity, and then again up and down a Grove or a Hill, and with a graceful or noble name reminding us of historical glories. Eventually they arrived at the double gates of a most comfortable-looking house, with a front courtyard half overgrown with good-sized trees, several of which actually hung some of their branches over the wall, suggesting protecting shelter for passing travellers during a heavy shower of rain—so like the hospitalities of the old time before us.

THE LOCALITY OF THE PIC-NIC.

"A grey-headed porter who opened the gates," was an event that we fancy we have read of before, somewhere or other, and more than once; but on the present occasion the gates were opened by the gardener, with his very pretty little daughter standing by his side in order to smile a welcome to every face that looked at her. A very countryfied sort of footman accompanied by a yet more country-bred groom now made their appearance, the latter being attired in a clean Kentish haymaker's smock-frock. The carriages drove in at one gate—"set down" at the hall door—and then making a semi-circle, passed out at the other gate. This was the house of Mathew Streete Sparrow, Esq. Taking Mrs. Silverley on one arm, he requested that nobody would linger in the hall to look at the pair of stag's horns over the umbrella-stand, or the trout in a glass case over the clock, but follow him at once. Pairing as best they might with so little time to choose, the party all followed, and descending a few steps at

the back of the house they at once, as by enchantment, found themselves in a really beautiful English garden. Roses, geraniums, brilliant poppies, anemones, bignonias, heaps of green from laurels and other shrubs, with a fine fountain playing charmingly somewhere out of sight—perhaps into a cistern. As for the dimensions of the garden, they were quite beyond calculation, for the boundaries were hidden, as to width, by trees and trellises covered with fragrant creepers, and as to length or depth, by a handsome marquee, with a small tent at one side, a little in the rear, as a special boudoir for the ladies, and a second small tent on the other side, where ice-pails, and bottles, and jugs, and covered things, and hampers, seemed to be assembled like “lords-in-waiting,” if again we may be pardoned for too bold a simile.

The London clocks had all struck twelve—not unanimously, but each after his own faculty—when the first barouche left Harley Street; and what with one lady and another, besides the harness, and a restive pony, it was ‘near upon a quarter to two before the three carriages fairly started for the Park, named after the late lamented George IV. before he fairly ascended the British Throne. In fact, we may say it was on the stroke of one p.m. before the missing whip of the pony-phæton’s conductor was discovered between the hinder heels of the ponies; and such was the discursive genius and skill of the leader, Mr. Jemmy Sparrow, that he managed to prolong the ante-pic-nician drive till it was nearly four p.m. as the party arrived at the tree-shadowed residence of Mr. Mathew Streete Sparrow. It was considered rather too early for an appetite worthy of the occasion, but as the curtain in front of the marquee was a little open in the middle, it was felt that what a glance suggested was not conducive to a wish for any great delay in the preliminary rustic sports.

In front of the marquee there was a lawn, “close-shaven” of course, and really of a good green hue. Judging by the parti-coloured posts and croquet-hoops stuck about, the whole space had evidently been arranged with a view to that fashionable game. The following animated conversation immediately took place.

“Who has done this?” exclaimed Mr. Jemmy, extending both arms. “Here’s a monopoly of the whole lawn. Uncle! did you order this?”

“I certainly did not,” said Mr. Mathew S. Sparrow with great composure.

“Do you approve of it, sir, may I ask?”

“If the present company do, I do;” and the worthy gentleman looked round appealingly.

Before any of the ladies or gentlemen had time to reply, Mr. Jemmy placed himself in a cricketing attitude—“Ah, if there had been room to *send* a ball, there would have been some sense in taking things for granted.”

"Oh, of course," said Mr. Glasscut; "of course we all know cricket! such 'a manly game'—that's what is always said—and that's all that *can* be said for it. Except as a fine exercise, whereby a man may destroy his hands for the exercise of any fine art."

"The fiddle, you mean, I suppose," said Mrs. Berry, wickedly keeping her countenance.

"Or the pianoforte, madam," rejoined Mr. Glasscut, drily; "and almost any other instrument."

"Except the double drum," said Lieutenant Finch.

"And the triangle too!" exclaimed the shrill voice of Master Tommy Tiles.

"Well, I don't care for any of this nonsense," retorted Mr. Jemmy; "nor for *this* either!" and he pointed scornfully to the croquet hoops. "First the toys were in arches, then in ovals, then in squares. First they were ten or twelve inches wide, then eight or nine, then seven inches, then five, and these are still less. And for the sole purpose of making the game more difficult, provoking, and dull. And at last we hear of an 'All England Croquet Club,' as if it were possible that all England could ever be so stupid."

"Come, sir," exclaimed Miss Silverley, laughing, "this won't do; some of *us* asked for this arrangement of the lawn."

"And give me leave to tell you, Mr. Jemmy," said the handsome young curate, blandly, "that the 'All England Croquet Club' have subscribed for new ground and a Challenge Cup."

"Yes, I know,—a Silver Thimble," said Mr. Jemmy, striding away.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed all the ladies. "Mr. Jemmy has retired from further conflict!" And so he had, for the sound of drawing corks showed that he was more beneficially engaged.

THE PIC-NIC.

So Miss Silverley, Mrs. Berry, and Miss Lily Robins, Mr. Glasscut, Lieutenant Finch, and Mr. Brightspire, took unto themselves partners and mallets, and commenced what they evidently regarded as a most interesting game.

There now arrived Captain O'Brien, not long landed from Canada, escorting Miss Yellowash from Australia, and without seeking to be poetical, as when the clouds of heaven are somewhat troubled with contentious winds, so that they really find it impossible to please everybody, while the rain threatens from one quarter, and the low rumble of thunder or some unwieldy waggon sounds from another quarter, and the prospects of the traveller or the pleasure-seeker, appear on the verge of blight, if not of tempestuous spiphlication, if suddenly a golden beam breaks through the neutral tints above, disperses all the vapours, and sheds a beneficent light of pleasure over all the fields below,—even so delightful a brightness came over the

whole of this green lawn, including the head-dresses and fancy wee things of bonnets, as well as the less ornate heads of the un-fair sex, when Captain Patrick O'Brien and Miss Harebell Yellow-sash broke upon the vision of the party here assembled.

"Battledore and shuttlecock behind the marquee!" shouted the captain.

"Hide-and-seek in the shrubbery!" cried Miss Yellow-sash.

"Cross-stag, or kiss-in-the-ring!" exclaimed Master Tommy. "Oh, do let us, Mr. Sparrow."

"Anything and everything," said Mr. Sparrow, "except leap-frog, because the ladies cannot join in that game."

Upon this hint, all who were not engaged in croquet, huddled round the leaders—to wit, the Captain from Canada and the Belle from Australia, and disappeared behind the marquee, the voice of Master Tommy being still heard declaring that he couldn't make out why ladies should not play leap-frog, as he perceived they all had got pretty doll's boots and doll's trousers. But other voices, and in various tones of excitement, from laughing calls and shouts to laughing screams and gabble, soon predominated, forming a very marked contrast to the intermittent calls and sedate wooden thuds of the croquet party on the other side, and also conveying an impression of a certain degree of proximity, and that the varieties afforded by the shrubbery were not adequate to long seclusion in the game of hide-and-seek.

And now Mrs. Silverley and Miss Euphemia Townley, closely followed by Mr. Sparrow, made their appearance round the other side of the marquee, looked inquiringly into the small provision tent, and then entered the marquee. They appeared to be engaged in settling who were to sit next to each other, in the first instance,—leaving it to "natural selection" afterwards, when parties came out to sit and recline upon the lawn with, and without, chairs and cushions.

"I am now a 'Rover!'" exclaimed the merry voice of Mrs. Berry, brandishing her croquet mallet, "and I shall at once begin to croquet friends and foes."

The lady's doubly good intention, however, quickly came to an end, as in hitting another ball she also struck her boot, and was that instant "dead" and out of the contest. Meantime, the side on which the careful, skilful, and handsome young curate was playing, had nearly passed through every hoop.

"We shall win, Miss Lily!" said he, loudly—for him,—“our side must win.”

"No, no!" cried Miss Silverley.

"Ah!" ejaculated Lieutenant Finch; "how truly Routledge says that the 'excitement towards the end of the game is almost inconceivable!'"

"Quite!" exclaimed the ironical voice of Mr. Jemmy, thrusting his

head out of the store tent with a tall hock-bottle in one hand and a corkscrew in the other. What more might have transpired in the way of repartee—what final struggles for victory might have occurred—and which side won the game, was suddenly thrown into confusion, if not oblivion, by the sound of a shrill bell and a small gong from the front of the marquee (the performers on those harmonious instruments being Mr. Sparrow, Senior, and Master Tommy Tiles), followed by the laughing rush and crowding round the back of the marquee of all those who had sought their amusement in the mysterious greeneries behind—where invisible fountains were heard to play, and birds in cages almost as invisible, were declared to sing all the tunes of the last opera.

There was no table inside the marquee. This was a real Pic-nic. But there was a large white table-cloth, edged with a broad border of pink and purple flowers, worked by rural hands in Spitalfields. This table-cloth was cut in the shape of more than half a harvest-moon, in fact, it was a moon in her three quarters. In the centre was a huge brown jug, of the Toby Philpot pattern, in which stood a huge bouquet, or rather a great English old-fashioned nosegay, crammed to ungraceful profusion with all manner of bright flowers fresh from Covent Garden, and all sorts of sweet-smelling sprigs.

On each side of this nosegay were oval dishes, full of sparkling ice, and seven champagne bottles "stood attention" in front of the places allotted to Mr. Sparrow and Mrs. Silverley, while three bottles enveloped in blue tissue paper, and pretending not to be punch, stood on guard in front of this entrance. The rest of the table-cloth was crowded with plates of ham and chicken ready carved, and game, whole and in pies, and jellies and custards, and dishes of piled-up fruits, and lots of cut glass of all shapes and sizes and colours, and no end of plates, spoons, knives, forks and billycock napkins. All these things were set out upon the three-quarter-moon cloth upon the close-shaven lawn, and round it were distributed cushions, sofa-pillows, covered bolsters, carriage-rugs and shawls, for the accommodation of our metropolitan pic-nicians.

Mr. Brightspire being requested to say grace, the accomplished young curate stood, and, without a moment's pause, and without shutting his eyes, sincerely ejaculated "Thank God!"—and amidst a sudden bee-hive hum of general hilarity and business, everybody went to work—eating, drinking, laughing, and paying a profusion of unnecessary or ridiculous attentions.

Toasts of the usual kind were proposed, and drunk in the usual way, and speeches were made so perfectly adapted to the occasion, that it would be unfair, and in some respects impossible, to give them in a printed form, so much of their delightful effect depending upon elocutionary arts, and "ladies' eyes," and all that volatile essence which is lost with the moment. A song, in a very high tenor voice,

so remarkably high indeed that the notes were often a little sharp, was given by Lieutenant Finch, accompanied by himself on the guitar, with which he was acquainted only in the first and second chords of C, while he indicated all that was wanting by a graceful and well-timed wave of the right hand, so that he won the enthusiastic applause of all assembled. Mr. Sparrow, Senior, was then "drunk with all the honours,"—coupled with the name of Mr. Jemmy, whose exertions in the present festive meeting upon the greensward of St. John's Wood were beyond all praise. Mr. Sparrow returned thanks from his heart, concluding with a hope that the present "Pic-nic in London" might be only the first of many such. Mr. Jemmy also returned thanks in a neat speech; and "if it was as dry as a nut, it was quite as sweet," remarked Mrs. Berry, which brought down much applause, and not a few witty comments upon both.

But Mr. Jemmy was destined to experience another and more severe trial of his powers of endurance under banter-fire. "Absent Friends," was the toast proposed by Captain O'Brien in a speech so full of delicious broguery, humour, and kind feeling, so rife with native wit, as well as wit quite foreign to the occasion, yet somehow wrought into it by the play of fancy, that the marquee fairly shook from its topmost canvas to its lowest peg-lines with the applause of the whole company. It is impossible to give it here, as no reporter was present. Miss Yellowssh however remarked, after a singularly clever allusion to Welsh ale, and a comparison between the South Downs and the mobs of sheep on her uncle's station (no, Sir, *not* at Woolloomooloo, which is a suburb of Sydney), this smart young lady, we say, remarked that the Captain's gallant toast ought to have been coupled with the name of a dear young friend, whom she had never yet seen, but had hoped to have met on the present occasion—Miss Maggie Lloyd of (Old) South Wales.

A VERY YOUNG LADY.

Before concluding this our first "Pic-nic in London," and before the reader who has smilingly formed one of the party, has witnessed, or anticipated, the usual merry confusion of the bad packing-up of glass and crockery in boxes, and the pell-mell stowage of impracticable iron and tin utensils, knives, forks, and spoons "all in a mess," in the creaking hampers—the shying away of empty bottles, and the juvenile peltings of almond-shells and pine-apple prickly crowns—not to mention the pursuits through shrubberies to entangle deflowered bouquet-stems amidst dishevelled flying locks;—before the reader has joined us in such final festive games (some of which never took place on the present occasion), we must introduce one more young lady who will appear among the party of our next year's Metropolitan "Pic-nic." This young lady is Miss Maggie Lloyd, of Caermarthenshire. She is a just-opening rose-bud of South Wales, who has never

yet been twenty miles beyond her native home at 'Pwyll-y-Pant, or the "Hole in a Hollow," two or three miles from the old Castle of Caerphilly. Young Mr. Glasscut had volunteered to write to her, making an invitation in the combined names of Mrs. Silverley and Mr. Mathew Streete Sparrow; but she was requested to reply to Mr. Jemmy Sparrow, as being the chief manager of this merry assemblage.

Miss Maggie Lloyd's delighted acceptance of the invitation for the Pic-nic of next summer, was made known by the following letter, which had only just been handed to Mr. Jemmy Sparrow. Having hastily glanced over it, he was shuffling it away in his breast-pocket, with so queer an expression of countenance, that almost everybody remarked it, and he was loudly and laughingly called upon to read the young lady's letter. To this Mr. Jemmy replied simply, "I shan't." Whereupon, there was a general shout, and a general call—"Read the letter!—Miss Lloyd's letter!" Mr. Jemmy again said, with provoking dryness, "I tell you, I shan't!" and he was actually turning away to see after getting the horses into his uncle's barouche for the ladies he had brought there, when Miss Silverley, Miss Glasscut, and Miss Lily Robins, fairly rushed shrieking upon him, holding his arms, while Master Tommy Tiles, got springing and clawing up his back, and twitched the letter out of his breast-pocket.

"Well!" said Mr. Jemmy, pocketing his hands, "I said I shouldn't read it, and I shan't."

"Hoo! hoo-oo-oo!" shouted all the girls, pointing their fingers at him, and all huddling and clinging together in a sort of embodied and embroidered true-lover's knot, to read it collectively.

But it was at last agreed, that as Miss Lloyd was to come on a visit to Mrs. Silverley in the first instance, the letter should be read aloud by Miss Silverley.

And this was the letter:—

A VERY YOUNG LADY'S LETTER.

"PWYLL-Y-PANT,
"CAERMARTHENSHIRE,
"SOUTH WALES.

"MY DEAR MR. JEMMY:

"I hope you will excuse my calling you 'Jemmy' as Mamma tells me it is not proper, and that I should on no account do so."

"Ha! ha! ha!" shouted all the girls.

"Order!" ejaculated Mr. Mathew Sparrow. Miss Silverley proceeded with a most laughing countenance—

"But she did not say it was *highly* improper, and so I have passed the Rubicon, being also of opinion that it will not be displeasing to you (*sensation*), as you were so very kind to me when I was a little girl of thirteen, and you came down here. I only hope Mamma will not ask to see this letter (*sensa-*

tion). She thinks so much of me at sixteen and a quarter ; much more, I am sure, than I think of myself."

"Oh, Mr. Jemmy!" tittered several of the girls.

"Order, ladies!" said Mr. Mathew Sparrow.

"Let me hasten to say how much obliged I am by the delightful invitation I have received to the 'Pic-nic in London' for next summer which your uncle and yourself are about to give, in conjunction with Mrs. Silverley, who has deputed young Mr. Glasscut to write to me for her, as she is so very very busy in arranging the hampers and things."

"There must be some mistake here," interposed Mrs. Silverley, in her sweet voice. "I never deputed Mr. Glasscut to write to Miss Lloyd."

"He volunteered," muttered Mr. Jemmy.

"Very impudent of him," said Mr. Mathew Sparrow: "proceed."

"But I was to make my reply to you, he said, as you had the management of most other matters, by the wish of your dear uncle.

"As this will be my first visit to London, you will not be surprised to hear how much my anticipations are raised by the various sketches and hints given to me by the letter of young Mr. Glasscut. So kind of him! With what delight shall I behold the violets and primroses which he informs me grow all the way down, on each side of Park Lane (*sensation*), with little intermission, during nine months of the year. (*Sensation*.) And what a perfect fairyland must it be in May Fair, where he describes the shrubberies, not only overlaid with may blossoms and clematis, but with various other blossoms during the whole time the fair lasts, and for months afterwards."

"Oh!" and shouts of laughter burst from all the company,—except the two Sparrows.

"Where is young Glasscut?" said Mr. Mathew Sparrow.

There was no response. He was not there. Miss Silverley resumed:

"Can this really be true? How very delightful! And he says something very like this, of the bursting out of flowers and shrubs in Spring Gardens (*sensation*), except, of course, in the absolute winter months; as also in Burlington Gardens, with their countless fountains and statues looking down into crystal pools (*laughter, and cries of Shame!*); in Clarence Gardens, where living sylphid forms are seen for ever glancing in the moonlight (*silence*); and in Short's Gardens and the Hop Gardens, leading, he tells me, so gracefully into the almost interminable corn and clover fields of Long Acre."

"Infamous!" ejaculated Mr. Sparrow, starting up. "Some of these places we all know well enough: but, who—*who*, I ask, can give us some account of Short's Gardens, and the graceful "Hop Gardens," for instance?"

Captain O'Brien rose. "Sir," said he, "and ladies and gentlemen, I have the honour of an accidental knowledge of these Hop Gardens. Setting aside all idea of hops—also of mops, which are much needed there—the Gardens in question bloom in Bloomsbury, or near New Street, Covent Garden. It is a narrow lane, squalid and of bad odour, where you may see great numbers of the smallest hoppers and

creepers of the rising generation, emulating ducks and pigs in a gutter. For dirt, rags, and several other more unsightly nuisances, it even surpasses the neighbour Gardens, viz., Short's."

Cries of "Shame! shame!" with half-suppressed laughter rose on all sides.

"Where is young Glasscut?" ejaculated Mr. Mathew Sparrow, looking angrily round. But the culprit not appearing, Mr. Sparrow sat down, and the reading proceeded.

"How is it that I never read of these places, or indeed heard of them before? Though I have a vague recollection of the fields of Lincoln's Inn, with their rustic turn-stiles. But topographical works are often so very imperfect—the few I have met with—and I cannot ask Mamma about these places, you know, Mr. Jemmy, because she would at once desire to see this letter I am writing to you. And that wouldn't do; now, would it?"

Several voices here murmured with ironical reproof, "Oh, Mr. Jemmy!" and "Too bad!" and "Shame!"

"It's a precious *shame* for you to read a girl's letter addressed to me!" said Mr. Jemmy, doggedly. "You wouldn't like it yourselves."

"Go on, Miss Silverley," said Mr. Mathew Sparrow, with dignity. "It was not meant to be a private letter."

"Of course it was not," ejaculated all the young ladies.

"Don't know about that," said Mr. Jemmy; "but go on if you like."

"I must not omit to make you aware that young Mr. Glasscut has told me as a great secret, that one of the first, or among the very first places where you are to give your 'Pic-nic' will be on Bethnal-Green, or on the thick grass-plots underneath some of the most richly-carved remains of the Gothic arch-ways of Moor-Gate (*sensation*), or the more floral vicinities of Bishop's Gate, especially in that spot, designated for concentration of fragrant profusion as the Flower Pot. (*Cries of 'O shame! shame!'*) Still I think, all things considered, that I look forward with equal delight to the umbrageous and fascinating varieties of Smith-Field."

"Stop!" exclaimed Mr. Mathew Sparrow, rising. "I'll not allow such hoaxes as these to be played by young London sparks upon innocent and much younger girls in Wales! Where is Mr. Glasscut, again I demand? Where is he, Miss Glasscut? I insist upon an answer."

"I really don't know, sir. It was very, very wrong of him. I can make no other answer."

"Oh, finish the letter!" cried several voices: and Miss Silverley proceeded to the close.

"Of Smith Field, Spital Fields, and of White Chapel (*Oh! oh!*) with their soft quiet meadows and romantic narrow walks in shady places, their sweet enclosures and lovely alleys (*sensation*), not to speak of the rich forest scenery of St. John's Wood, and of Paradise Street (is it really a street?) in Marylebone. And oh! Green Arbour Court, or Alley!—delightful abode of all the Muses—the sacred Nine!" (*Loud cries of 'Shameful!—naughty Mr. Glasscut.'*)

"Now, I must stop, as I hear Mamma's step, and she might not altogether approve of my taking up so much of your time (*ahem!*), dear Mr. Jemmy (*ahem!* and *tittering*), with all these happy anticipations, most of which, and why not all, I feel quite certain will be realized, more than realized."

"Much more," muttered Mr. Jemmy—"but go on."

"No: it was a false alarm. Mamma has turned off into the garden to drive out the fowls. They are so very troublesome for this, but one doesn't like to be unkind to them, mischievous creatures as they are, especially when they have a brood of chicks popping and tweeting and flittering all around them. But I really mustn't forget Ibury Barn, with its white owls, so truthfully described by young Mr. Glasscut (*Cries of 'Abominable! infamous!'*); and Hizlingtown, with its colossal Angel (*Oh! oh!*); the Swiss Cottage, with the Ampstead Hills (so he writes, but surely this must be in the haste of the moment, they are no doubt more correctly, Ampstead Hills) in the blue distance; and Sadler's Wells, too, which he assures me are far surpassing Tunbridge Wells (*shame! shame!*); the Springs of Saratoga (that's somewhere in North America, is it not?) or the bubbling Brunnens of Nassau, which I once read of. My brain fairly dizzies with the hopeful imagination of all those things!

"I wonder what will be in the hampers? I don't care much about eating, but I do *so* want to know all I can beforehand. I hope there will be plenty of lemonade, as some days it will be very warm, even in St. John's Wood and Sadler's Wells; also cold ham and chicken are not bad. Now, you mustn't be disgusted with me, dear Mr. Jemmy, for talking of such things—"

Cries of "Oh, dear no!" "Of course he will not!" here drowned the speaker's voice.

"I tell you what," began Mr. Jemmy, with an angry voice. But it was of no use. "Why the girl's only sixteen and a few months, and here are you all trying to make out——" but his voice was drowned, and he saw it was of no use.

"Because," resumed the letter-reader, "because you know girls must talk of something, and very often we talk of the last things we are thinking of, or the least thing,—that is, of what is not at all in our real thoughts (*ahem* and *order!*) So, be sure to give my best love to Mrs. Silverley, and your uncle, dear Mr. Mathew Sparrow, also to Miss Silverley and Miss Glasscut; and believe me, with affectionate remembrances to yourself, in which I am sure Mamma will join, whenever I tell her,

"Yours sincerely,

"MAGGIE LLOYD."

THE CONCLUSION.

Here everybody began to speak at once;—indignantly, lovingly, angrily, merrily—most affectionately of dear little Maggie—most comically denunciatory of that *wicked* Mr. Glasscut, most ironically apologetic to the frowning Mr. Jemmy for having read his private-public love-letter. Love-letter?—Yes; what else could it be called?—of course it was a love-letter; and, as such, ought never to have been read aloud! And then they all burst out laughing.

The first beams of the summer moon were now beginning to show a

faint silver upon the tops of the trees of the sainted wood—to wit, of St. John—and it was time to depart. Many things belonging to Mrs. Berry, Mrs. Silverley, and Miss Euphemia, had to be taken away, but all the rest were to be left with Mr. Sparrow.

A scrambling fire of words now ensued, accompanied by appropriate action,—

“Where’s my bonnet?”

“Where’s my shawl?”

“No—not that. How chilly the air is getting!”

“Nor that—nor that—oh, dear me!”

“How shall we ever?—Shall we *really* ever? No—never!”

“*Euch!* oo! for shame, sir!”

“Why?—what was it? What did he do?”

“Who?—what did somebody—where—when—*now!*”

“It *was* you—you know it was!—Yes, he did, dear.”

“Ha! ha! ha!—did he, indeed! ha! ha! ha!”

“But I assure you, dear Miss——”

“Don’t dear me—it was very rude of you!”

“I’m sure I beg ten thousand——”

“Ha! there’s my bonnet!”

“You know very well what——. Yes, he did!”

“Order, I say! decorum, young gentleman!”

“I give you my sacred word, Mr. Sparrow, I only kissed the chignon!”

“Ha! ha! ha! his sacred word!”

“Now, are we all ready?”

“No!—no!—no! we give our sacred words!”

“Be steady, young gentlemen, I must repeat!”

“You’ll come in our carriage!—*do* come in our carriage! we’ll make such nice room!”

“O! O!—did you hear *that!*?”

“Order, gentlemen. I must entreat you to be very polite to the ladies!”

“There will be room in our——, plenty.”

“Impossible, my dear!”

“Is it, aunt?—suppose we just see?”

“Ha! ha! ha!—the sacred chignon!—let’s just see.”

“Now are we all ready, again I ask?”

“All! all! all! ha! ha! ha.”

Boxes, cases, cloaks, rugs, wrappers, were all collected; horses, and ponies were all announced as ready; phaetons and barouches were filled by their respective parties, and nags were mounted. This is rendered in the florid style, to give the effect of numbers. Off they all trooped, most talkative, most merrily,—and so ended our first Picnic in London—the first of the kind “on record,” as here above faithfully portrayed by our friends the Daisies (Brothers) of Moorfields.

EURIPIDES IN MODERN ENGLISH.—BROWNING'S BALAUSTION.

SECOND PART.

WE were compelled by want of space to defer the consideration of our chosen specimen of the third method of representing Euripides to the English reader: we proceed to examine it now. It is, as our readers will remember, that version of his *Alcestis* which Browning has incorporated with the poem which he has been pleased to designate *Balaustion's Adventure*.

The appearance of the author of *The Ring and the Book* as a translator, and a very correct translator too, of Euripides was occasioned by Mr. Leighton's Fight of Hercules with Death for the Soul of Alcestis. A noble lady requested him to make her a version of the tragedy from which that picture derived its subject; while a dearer form beckoned assenting from the spirit-land, pointing on the scroll which could not die with her to her own verses in praise of Euripides. The picture will be fresh in the recollection of many of our readers. In Browning's words—

There lies Alcestis dead, beneath the sun
She longed to look her last upon, beside
The sea which somehow tempts the life in us
To come trip over its wide waste of waves,
And try escape from earth, and fleet as free.
Behind the body, I suppose there bends
Old Pheres in his hoary impotence,
And women waiters in a corner crouch,
Close each to other, agonizing all,
As fastened, in fear's rhythmic sympathy,
To two contending opposite. There strains
The might o' the hero 'gainst his more than match,
Death, dreadful not in thew and bone, but like
The envenomed substance that exudes some dew,
Whereby the merely honest flesh and blood
Will fester up and run to ruin straight,
Ere they can close with, clasp, and overcome
The poisonous impalpability
That simulates a form beneath the flow
Of those grey garments.

That strong wrestler is Hercules: the scene which the artist portrays is described, but not represented, in the drama which Euripides founded on the well-known story of Alcestis. In it the young wife of Admetus the Thessalian king consents to die in her husband's place; Apollo having obtained for him the boon of a prolonged existence if

he can persuade anyone to suffer the death which is his due. In a version of the story, recently revived by Mr. Palgrave, which also finds a place in Mr. Browning's epilogue, it is Proserpine herself who, touched by the self-devotion of Alcestis, restores her to her husband and children. But according to Euripides, her life is won back by Hercules after a tremendous struggle with *Death* himself. The beginning of his play is taken up by the representation of his heroine's death, with every circumstance attendant on it which can stir the beholder's pity; the middle, by the accidental intrusion of Hercules into the house of mourning, favoured by the hospitable deceit of Admetus; while the conclusion depicts his restoration of Alcestis to her husband as the reward of the king's generous concealment of his own woe to do honour to his mighty guest.

In no play does Euripides show himself more worthy of the character which we have ascribed to him as the Hellenic Tennyson, than in his *Alcestis*. His heroine stands before us in unapproachable dignity; the very embodiment of conjugal and maternal love. The pathetic tenderness of her dying moments thrills the spectator's soul with compassion, as her self-devotion rouses his highest admiration; while the contrast presented between the heroism of Hercules, confiding in his own strong arm, and that of the gentle Alcestis, strong in the midst of weakness with a courage born of love, is decidedly to the advantage of the woman. But this moral grandeur is attained by a process which pitifully dwarfs her husband's form. Precisely to the extent by which her spiritual stature exceeds the common standard of humanity does his fall below it. Probably no *man* ever read the *Alcestis* without a strong feeling of impatience and growing anger at the husband's unmanliness, who weeps over his dying wife and carries her forth, with bitter tears, to burial, but yet never rescinds his acceptance of her too generous offer—never asserts his right to save her from death by dying himself. When, therefore, the play concludes by leaving Admetus in safe possession alike of the life which he grasped so selfishly and of the noble woman whom he prized so much below her real value, the spectator's sense of what is due to poetic justice remains unsatisfied. Nor can he frame a pleasant image to himself of the restored wife's new life, when the three days' silence, by which the poet adjourns the difficult first greeting, shall be over. Who feels quite sure what a Sixth Act of Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* might have contained? Yet Hermione has only died in figure, not in reality; and the penance of Leontes has lasted, not for one brief day, but for sixteen years! This weak point in an otherwise most beautiful story (brought into stronger relief by the realistic treatment of Euripides) occasions the chief defect of the tragedy in an artistic point of view; the collapse of interest throughout its middle part. The spectator's eager attention dies and revives with Alcestis herself; where *she* is absent it languishes. The sorrow of Admetus, beautifully painted as it is, affects

him mainly as a tribute due, and more than due, to her memory ; while the widower's undignified wrangle with his aged father, as he reproaches him with the selfishness which he has himself copied but too faithfully, arouses displeasure and disgust.

Yet in spite of these imperfections, the *Alceſtis* is one of the most delightful of the plays of Euripides, from its truth to nature, its unrivalled pathos, and the high strain of poetry to which it rises in its lyric passages.

Let us see what Mr. Browning has done with the grand old story ; confident as we open his book that the cowardice of Admetus will meet with no quarter from the author of "*Prospice* ;" the antique ideal of wifehood be sure of a fitting interpretation from the writer of the noble dedication of "*Men and Women*." First of all, then, we glance at the charming introduction ; that tale so full of life and spirit of the Rhodian ship which the pirate bark chased into the harbour of Syracuse, the year after the sad fate of Nicias and his unfortunate expedition ; the ship which was doomed to instant expulsion thence on account of its crew's Athenian sympathies, but saved by that love of the Sicilian Greeks for the verse of Euripides, which, as history tells us, proved the deliverance of many of his captive countrymen. A young girl on board, *Balaustion* (Pomegranate-Flower), offers to recite one of the poet's finest dramas before the assembled populace of the city ; and gains a kind reception for her companions, and applause and reward for herself, by repeating the *Alceſtis* on the steps of the Temple of Hercules. Months after, safe at Athens, on the eve of her own marriage, she tells her adventure to four chosen friends, and rehearses to them the tragedy once more, interspersed with comments of her own. The play, thus felicitously introduced, follows ; its iambics very faithfully rendered in that peculiar diction which a large section of the English public now knows intimately as the Browningsque, a species of blank verse which stands related to that of our standard poets, much as does the style of Mr. Carlyle to that of our classic prose-writers ; warmly coloured, picturesque, and expressive, but defective in that dignity and repose which the interpreter of Hellenic art should possess. The lyric portion of the drama is unhappily translated in the same metre as its dialogue ; sometimes, indeed, not translated at all, but merely indicated by a brief summary of its sense. Thus one half of the play, and that half the most beautiful, is lost to us as far as form goes ; a loss which nothing can compensate, as every Greek scholar will bear witness. On the other hand, we have the curious and interesting feature of Mr. Browning's own comments, with the valuable help they give towards entering into the spirit of the tragedy. The shrewdness of these comments contrasts indeed rather strangely with the youth and inexperience of their supposed speaker. Like the Mephistopheles of the second "*Faust*," Browning is better fitted to correspond with romantic than with classic spectres ; more "a

creature of the Northern clime" than of the sunny south. And though he has here assumed a more pleasing shape than that of the hideous Phorcyad, a mask carefully modelled after the young Rhodian's classic beauty, yet the tones of the well-known voice betray the actor in a moment. The girl is far too wise for her years; nay, she knows some things which were not known even to the wisest of her contemporaries; she is decidedly more a "Teuton" than an antique Greek: the attempted impersonation fails, Balaustion disappears, and her poet stands revealed as he casts off her encumbering draperies. So recognized, it is still true that after the wont of interpreters he imports by his comments a meaning, at times, into his author, which we have much ado to find there without his assistance; under his skilful handling Hercules rises some cubits in moral stature, and Admetus ripens into a nobleness of nature which we rather desire than expect in him. But we owe to Browning the deepening of many a touch which the careless reader might have overlooked; the bringing out the full significance of such moral teaching as the play really contains. Nothing, for instance, can be better than his acute remarks on the repulsive dialogue between Admetus and his father, Pheres, after the death of Alcestis.

"Like hates like:

Accordingly Admetus,—full i' the face
Of Pheres, his true father, outward shape
And inward fashion, body matching soul,—
Saw just himself when years should do their work
And reinforce the selfishness inside,
Until it pushed the last disguise away:
As when the liquid metal cools i' the mould,
Stands forth a statue: bloodless, hard, cold bronze.
So in old Pheres, young Admetus showed,
Pushed to completion: and a shudder ran,
And his repugnance soon had vent in speech."

How fine too is his account of death's power to dispel illusions; of the sword which has for office to cut the soul off

"from something in this world which hides
Truth, and hides falsehood, and so lets us live,"

as exemplified in the absence of tender fictions from Alcestis' last farewell. Then, how well he fills for us the blanks of the missing stage directions; how real under his guidance becomes to us the startling effect of the voice of Hercules as he enters the group of mourners waiting outside, while the corpse of Alcestis is being prepared for burial within the palace.

"Every touch
O' the garland on those temples, tenderest
Disposure of each arm along its side
Came putting out what warmth i' the world was left."

When

"Sudden into the midst of sorrow leapt,
Along with the gay cheer of that great voice,

Hope, joy, salvation : Hercules was here !
Himself o' the threshold, sent his voice on first
To herald all that human and divine
I' the weary, happy face of him,—half god,
Half man,—which made the god-part god the more."

What a picture, too, he paints for us of the funeral procession, as it were in two compartments : the one, visible only to the mental eye, of Death marching at the head

"O' the mourners—one hand pointing out their path,
With the long pale terrific sword we saw,
The other leading, with grim tender grace,
Alceſtis quieted and conſecrate :

the lower compartment displaying

“Alcestis, calmly crowned,
Carried aloft, in decency and state,
To the last burial-place and burning-pile !”

Such are some of the most noticeable passages in which the translator comes forward in his own person to illustrate or explain. It is now time to give specimens of his actual version itself. Our first shall be a portion of the handmaid's pathetic description of her mistress's deportment on the fatal morning. The Chorus of assembled friends (after Death broke away from Apollo, and rushed into the doomed house) wait outside for tidings. The weeping attendant depicts the little children clinging to their mother's robe, and receiving her last kisses ; the sorrowing servants bidding their kind mistress farewell, after she has stood, robed and crowned, in her pale loveliness to make her last prayer to the gods of the living ; when she

“ stood before the hearth, and prayed :
 ‘ Mistress, because I now depart the world,
 Falling before thee the last time, I ask—
 Be mother to my orphans ! wed the one
 To a kind wife, and make the other’s mate
 Some princely person : nor, as I who bore
 My children periah, suffer that they too
 Die all untimely, but live, happy pair,
 Their full glad life out in the fatherland ! ’
 And every altar through Admetus’ house
 She visited and crowned and prayed before,
 Without a tear, without a groan.

Reaching her chamber, falling on her bed,
There, truly, burst she into tears and spoke :
' O bride-bed, where I loosened from my life
Virginity for that same husband's sake
Because of whom I die now—fare thee well !
Since nowise do I hate thee : me alone
Hast thou destroy'd ; for, shrinking to betray
Thee and my spouse, I die ; but thee, O bed,
Some other woman shall possess as wife—
Truer, no ! but of better fortune, say !'

It is impossible not to admire the art with which Euripides, both by the pathetic speech, of which these lines form part, and by all that precedes it, excites the spectator's desire to the utmost height to behold the dying queen. He can hardly restrain his impatience, after the handmaid has announced her mistress's wish to see the light of day once more outside the palace, till, accompanied by her mourning husband and children, and heralded by snatches of choric prayer and song, Alcestis is carried upon the stage (in Browning's words),—

"The consecrated lady, borne to look
Her last—and let the living look their last—
She at the sun, we at Alcestis."

The death-scene which follows (unsurpassed in pathos by any other of Euripides, unless by the brief passage, already quoted, at the close of his *Hippolytus*) divides itself, in the original, into two parts. The first and shorter represents by its varied lyric movement, now retarded, now hurried, as sorrow presses on the heart or fear disturbs it, the strange bewildering excitement of Alcestis at the approach of death, echoed, as it is, by the husband in fainter tones, through sympathy with her. Here the changeful metre of the Greek is essential; and the unchanged blank verse of the version before us cannot adequately represent it. It is well fitted, on the other hand, to the second and longer division of the scene. For there a calm has succeeded to the tempest in the dying woman's mind. Not repenting of her generous offer, yet unable to prevent his acceptance of it from lowering Admetus in her esteem, she rouses herself to exact securities from him for her children's welfare; and then, having spent her last energies in their behalf, bids them farewell and dies. Persuaded that the effect of the contrast between this scene's opening and conclusion can only be felt through adherence to its form, we subjoin its lyrical commencement by a different hand, resuming Browning's version where the iambics of the original begin.

ALCESTIS.

[O Sun ! O light of day !
Swift clouds of heaven, in circling course that speed !

ADMETUS.

That Sun sees thee, sees me—both in sore need—
We sinned not to make Death tear thee away.

ALCESTIS.

Earth ! roof of this my home !
Native Iolkos ! palace where I wed !

ADMETUS.

Give all not up, dear Sufferer ! lift thine head ;
Pray that some pity may the gods o'ercome.

ALCESTIS.

I see, I see the two-oared Bark ;
 The dead men's Ferryer stern,
 Charon, his hand upon his pole, even now
 Calls to me with bent brow :
 "Why tarry ? quick ! delay not my return !"
 Thus, thus, he hurries me down to those waters dark.

ADMETUS.

Alas ! that voyage drowns me with bitterness :
 Ill-fated that I am ! in sorrows measureless !

ALCESTIS.

They lead, they lead me, seest thou not ?
 Into the dead's wide hall :
 With eyes dark-gleaming, black-browed, strong of wing,
 Glares Hades, gloomy king ;
 What dost thou ? let me go, vain now recall :
 Dread is the road I yet must traverse,—sad my lot.

ADMETUS.

Sad thy lot—sad for all thy friends ; but more
 For me and for thy babes who share this anguish sore.

ALCESTIS.

Let me go, let me go !
 Lay me down ; for my limbs fail me fast !
 I draw nigh to the kingdom below ;
 For a dark night at last
 Dims mine eyes ; see its shade o'er me cast.
 Children, my children, ye
 Have now no mother ; her fond cares are o'er.
 Ah ! may ye joyful see
 That light which none can to her eyes restore.]

Admetus rejoins with more weak lamentations ; more vain entreaties to his wife not to forsake her children and the husband who solemnly assures her that his life and death are bound up in hers. "Which brought out truth to judgment," in the words of the commentator ; who sees Alcestis, by a supreme effort of will, wave away from before her dying eyes the phantom form of Charon, and all the pageantry of Hades, to fix them "on the protesting man" whom she is about to address with words of unflattering truth. We resume Browning's version.

ALCESTIS.

Admetus,—how things go with me thou seest,—
 I wish to tell thee, ere I die, what things
 I will should follow. I—to honour thee,
 Secure for thee, by my own soul's exchange,
 Continued looking on the daylight here—
 Die for thee—yet, if so I pleased, might live,
 Nay, wed what man of Thessaly I would,
 And dwell i' the dome * with pomp and queenliness.

* A translation much nearer to the sound than to the sense of *δῶμα*.

I would not, would not live bereft of thee.

Do me in turn a favour,—favour, since
Certainly I shall never claim my due,
For nothing is more precious than a life.

She then implores her husband never to give their children a step-mother, whose yoke, hard on the boy, might press doubly on the girl, to whom she says regretfully—

For neither shall thy mother watch thee wed,
Nor hearten thee in childbirth, standing by
Just when a mother's presence helps the most !
No, for I have to die : and this my ill
Comes to me, nor to-morrow, no, nor yet
The third day of the month, but now, even now,
I shall be reckoned among those no more.

Admetus answers with tender assurances that he will fulfil all her wishes. Still he never insists on taking her place in the grave, from which he yet declares that he would do or suffer anything to rescue her. Her only reply to his protestations is to call her children to witness them ; and then, on their faith, to entrust them to him.

ALCESTIS.

Then, for such promise of accomplishment,
Take from my hand these children !

ADMETUS.

Thus I take—
Dear gift from the dear hand !

ALCESTIS.

Do thou become
Mother, now, to these children in my place !

ADMETUS.

Great the necessity I should be so,
At least, to these bereaved of thee !

ALCESTIS.

Child—child !
Just when I needed most to live, below
Am I departing from you both !

ADMETUS.

Ah me !
And what shall I do, then, left lonely thus ?

ALCESTIS.

Time will appease thee : who is dead is nought.

ADMETUS.

Take me with thee—take,* by the Gods below.

ALCESTIS.

We are sufficient—we who die for thee.

ADMETUS.

O Powers, ye widow me of what a wife !

ALCESTIS.

And truly the dimmed eye draws earthward now !

ADMETUS.

Wife, if thou leav'st me, I am lost indeed !

ALCESTIS.

She once was—now is nothing, thou may'st say.

ADMETUS.

Raise thy face, nor forsake thy children thus !

ALCESTIS.

Ah, willingly indeed I leave them not !
But—fare ye well, my children ! †

Then the boy calls with loud laments on the dead mother who can answer her “little nestling's” cry no more : Admetus lifts up his head as one stunned to pronounce his decree for his subjects' solemn mourning ; and the scene closes by the following choric ode in praise of the dead, which we offer in a lyric form for our readers' comparison with Mr. Browning's iambics :—

[CHORUS.

1st Strophe.

Daughter of Pelias ! go
To Hades' dwelling with good auguries,
Where thou must live in sunless house below
Let Hades, dark-haired god, let him the steersman know,
Old Escort of the dead,
The dreaded oar that plies,
That never till this day o'er Acheron sped
A woman good as thou, his boat's new freight and prize.

1st Antistrophe.

Thee shall the minstrels sing
Oft to the seven-stringed notes of mountain lyre ;
Oft too their song, thy praises echoing,

* This is the utmost pitch to which the heroism of Admetus rises during his wife's lifetime. There is a chilling dignity in her response.

†

“Against my will I say it, but I must :

Farewell, my children,”

would perhaps be a little nearer to the original “οὐ δῆδ' ἐκούσα γ', ἀλλὰ χαίρει”, & τελευτᾷ ;” but it is not easy to give its full force.

To flute-notes sad shall rise in Sparta, heralding
 (Flooding the sky all night)
 Carneian moon's soft fire.
 Oft in Athene's city, rich and bright,—
 Such theme thou leav'st, to bards a praise and a desire.

2nd Strophe.

Would that in me it lay,
 Thee forth from Hades' hall,
 To guide to light of day
 (Cocytus passed) and call
 Charon to row another way !
 For thou, alone of women, lady dear !
 Didst not fear
 Thy husband's life with thine own life to buy :
 Therefore upon thee lightly lie
 The earth. And if that husband wed
 Afresh, my hatred light upon his head,
 And these thine orphans' enmity.

2nd Antistrophe.

His mother's heart could shun
 The grave, nor in it hide
 To help her child undone ;
 His old sire, terrified,
 Dared not redeem from death his son :
 They clung to life despite their hoary hair ;
 Thou didst dare,
 In blooming youth, with life's sweet breath to part
 For husband's sake. Ah ! may my heart
 Gain such a wife ; a treasure found
 How rarely ! then shall days with bliss be crowned
 And never bring me sorrow's smart.]

We must pass over several scenes which contain the various incidents which precede and follow the funeral : the inopportune arrival of Hercules (dismissed to feast in the guest-chamber with closed doors by the assurance of Admetus that he is about to bury only a stranger denizen of his home) ; the appearance of the king's old father, Pheres, with ornaments for the dead, and their rejection by Admetus, who is foolish enough to upbraid his father for his refusal to die in his stead (as though selfishness grew weaker instead of stronger by exercise, and as though he had himself purchased the right to reprove it in another by his own disinterested conduct) ; and, lastly, the discovery to Hercules of the King's hospitable deception by the attendant, whose indignation at hearing song and laughter in the desolate house is a fine natural touch, one further witness to the goodness of his dead lady, and should not have been attributed by our commentator to the petty spite which he pictures as

“ Somewhat soothed,
 However, that he had adroitly dashed
 The mirth of the great creature ; oh, he marked

The movement of the mouth, how lip pressed lip,
 And all the joy and wonder of the wine
 Withered away, like fire from off a brand
 The wind blows over—beacon though it be,
 Whose merry ardour only meant to make
 Somebody all the better for its blaze,
 And save lost people in the dark—quenched now !”

After Hercules has resolved on challenging Death, and departed to seek his terrible adversary, the mourners return to the desolated palace, as Browning says well and simply—

“ In came the mourners from the funeral,
 One after one ; until we hoped the last
 Would be Alcestis, and so end our dream.
 Could they have really left Alcestis lone
 I’ the way-side sepulchre ! Home, all save she !”

And now Admetus realises at last his loss in all its hopelessness :—

“ Now he was made aware how dear is death,
 How loveable the dead are, how the heart
 Yearns in us to go hide where they repose,
 When we find sunbeams do no good to see
 Nor earth rests rightly where our footsteps fall.”

Or, in language closer to his speech in Euripides, though perhaps scarcely so beautiful as Browning’s, he exclaims as he pauses on his threshold :—

[Sad my approach ! sad the sight
 Of my widowed abode !
 Woe, woe ! I walk wildered in night,
 Nor to death find the road.
 My mother for evil fate bore me,
 I envy the dead ;
 My love, my desire, hastes before me
 Their dim halls to tread.
 I hate to behold the sun’s ray,
 To set foot on the ground,
 Since Death that dear pledge from mine arms rent away
 And in Hades fast bound.]

The Chorus offer commonplace consolations like those of Hamlet’s mother. They tell Admetus that his grief cannot profit the dead ; not seeing that they add a sting to it by reminding him of the fact. He is not the first man who has lost a good wife, they say ; and Admetus is exasperated like Hamlet at their thinking a great calamity made less by its being shared by many. He wails forth—

[Long is our mourning, long is our grief
 For the loved whom the earth has hid :
 I, in her tomb, would have found relief,
 Cast myself in ; why did ye forbid ?

Then had I laid me in death beside
 The best of women ; and two for one,
 Two faithful souls should across the tide
 Of waters dark have to Hades gone.]

Amid more well-meaning but wearisome exhortations Admetus goes on to enter his house, but starts back shuddering at the ghosts of happier days which meet him at the door :—

[Oh house fair and great !
 How shall I enter thee ? still call thee home ?
 Dwell here with changed fate ?
 Ah ! not as I came once, I come ;—
 Then I walked through this gate,
 Torch-lit by the Pelian pine,
 Sounding glad marriage-song,
 My loved wife's hand in mine ;
 While loud shouted the throng
 My bride's name and mine with glad cries,
 The high-born, nobly wed :—
 — Now for nuptial hymns wallings sad rise ;
 Now for white robes fair spread
 Veiled mourners, black-stoled, meet mine eyes
 And conduct me within to my desolate bed.]

The Chorus make another inefficient response, and then Admetus sums up his loss and gain, and delivers deliberate judgment against his own choice. For now has come the time, in the words of the commentator—

“ When, the last of bubbles broke,
 The latest circlet widened all away
 And left a placid level, that upswam
 To the surface the drowned truth in dreadful change.”

Now he declares in the speech which in the version before us commences—

“ Friends, I account the fortune of my wife
 Happier than mine, though it seem otherwise :
 For her indeed no grief will ever touch,
 And she from many a labour pauses* now,
 Renowned one,”—

that he has nothing to expect henceforth but misery at home and disgrace abroad ; when his enemies shall point at him as a coward, and say of him,

“ ‘ He hates his parents for declining death,
 Just as if he himself would gladly die ! ’ ”

The lowest depth of despondency is now reached. Admetus, though,

* Another instance of sound preferred to sense. To pause in English is to cease for a while, and then recommence. In Greek it is to leave off altogether ; which should have been expressed here by a different word.

pace Browning, still selfish in his sorrow, has learned that even in a selfish point of view a man may do worse for himself than consent to die. The Chorus stand at last hopeless of giving comfort, paralysed by a sense of the irresistible might of Fate; and their song (a lyric version of which we subjoin) plants, as it were, the tombstone firmly on the grave of the lost Alcestis, bearing her fair effigy, with an inscription in her praise, that the spectator, partaking for a while in their acquiescence in an evil now past remedy, may see the unexpected joy of the final scene in stronger relief from the dark background on which it rises.

[CHORUS.

1st Strophe.

I have sought truth in song,
Soared upward, searched out lore
Of many a sage; but found
No force so strong
That dread Necessity must bend before.
Nor grows there herb on ground,
In Orphic strain renowned,
Or Phœbus' gift to Asclepiad (healing sore
Pains of man's state) that can give aid one whit the more.

1st Antistrophe.

She only hath no shrine,
Her statue none draws near;
No sacrifice she heeds.
Lady divine,
Lay not upon me load more hard to bear
Than I have borne! Zeus needs
Thee when to act proceeds
His will. Like reeds thou bendest sword or spear;
Thy harsh resolve stands firm, it knows nor shame nor fear.

2nd Strophe.

Thee too hath bound with hands that none can flee, O King!
The goddess. Bear thy woe; thou canst not bring
The dead by tears to earth again.
Children of gods lie withering
And wasting in death's chain.
Dear was she while with us in life,
Dear yet among the dead;
For, of all noble women, thou didst wed
The noblest for thy wife.

2nd Antistrophe.

Nor reckon thou thy lost wife's heaped mound for a tomb,
Nay, but a shrine, like gods' who save from doom;
Turning to which the travellers pray.
Such up the winding path shall come,
And, coming, this shall say:
"She for her husband bravely died,
Now among gods is blest;

Hail, lady ! send to us from out thy rest
Help, and good fortune's tide."]

The last line has hardly died away when Hercules appears, leading a veiled woman, whom he announces as the prize newly won by him in a wrestling match, and bids Admetus keep safe for him until he returns from Thrace. The king starts back with horror, and implores his friend to seek an asylum for the stranger elsewhere : then, a resemblance startling him, he says—

" But thou,—O woman, whose'er thou art,—
Know, thou hast all the form, art like as like
Alcestis, in the bodily shape ! Ah me !
Take—by the gods—this woman from my sight,
Lest thou undo me, the undone before !
Since I seem—seeing her—as if I saw
My own wife ! And confusions cloud my heart,
And from my eyes the springs break forth ! Ah, me
Unhappy—how I taste for the first time
My misery in all its bitterness ! "

Hercules insists : this sorrow will pass away, a new wife will some day dispel it. Then Alcestis trembles with joy beneath her veil, as she hears her husband say—

" When I betray her, though she is no more—
May I die ! "

Her friendly champion wrings a reluctant consent from Admetus, makes him take the hand from which he shrinks as from a treason, and then at last reveals to him the face of Alcestis. Mr. Leighton ought to complete his work by painting for us that recognition of the dead, once more alive, by the husband for whom she died. We know how it must have haunted the bereaved Milton's slumbers, since he woke from them to write—

" Methought I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from death by force, though pale and faint."

Euripides leaves it to the spectator's imagination. Admetus is commonplace in his joy as before in his sorrow, in his gratitude to Hercules as before in his selfishness ; and Alcestis stands mute before him. No tender, grave accents, like those of the restored Hermione in the last scene of the *Winter's Tale*, tremble on her lips. Some true instinct taught her poet (heathen though he was) the same reserve which forbade the inspired penman to report to us the words of the risen Lazarus ; and Admetus is significantly bidden to await the vanishing of her consecration to the lower gods, and to expect to hear her voice on the third day. Browning's description (all but one needlessly grotesque word) comes gracefully to aid the dialogue :

"There is no telling how the hero *twitched*
 The veil off : and there stood, with such fixed eyes
 And such slow smile, Alcestis' silent self !
 It was the crowning grace of that great heart
 To keep back joy ; procrastinate the truth
 Until the wife, who had made proof and found
 The husband wanting, might essay once more,
 Hear, see, and feel him renovated now—
 Able to do, now, all herself had done,
 Risen to the height of her : so, hand in hand,
 The two might go together, live and die."

We confess that these three last lines seem to us a most bold flight of the imagination ; and we appeal to all the readers of the *Alcestis*, whether in the Greek or in the able version before us, to say whether they can be justified from the dialogue. We wish, we greatly wish, that we could believe in this sudden ascent of King Admetus in the moral scale. But, considering that verbal protestations of love for his wife were things in which he was never wanting in his worst moments, we know not how the most vehement declarations against a second marriage (uttered, too, on the very day of her funeral) can be evidence of a decisive change of character, remaining, as they perforce must, untested. We should have thought that, with Hercules, deeds would always have found more favour than words ; and if he, as Browning tells us, on hearing Admetus promise to die rather than betray his dead wife,

" *Knew* his friend,
 Planted firm foot, now, on the loathly thing
 That was Admetus late ! would die, he *knew*
 Ere let the reptile raise its crest again,"

we can only say that he must have *known* it by intuition, having but slender evidence to produce for the fact.

But in truth, alike in the modern reader's contempt for the character of Admetus, and in Browning's efforts to restore him to our esteem, we see the effects of judging the productions of one age by the moral standard of another. We despise the man for the tenacity of grasp with which he clung to life ; because we are familiar with the conception of this present life as the short preface to a book of whose pages there shall be no end. Euripides considered it as the whole of man's existence in any desirable state. To his mind, therefore, his hero was, if in some degree blameworthy, yet very excusable : and he seems to have felt secure of the pity of his audience for the man who to preserve to his children their father, to his subjects their monarch, accepted the sacrifice of a life inferior in value to his own to the world in general, though to his own soul inestimably precious.

In the epilogue to *Balaustion* we are offered a more heroic, but less life-like, Admetus. The Rhodian girl is there made to shadow forth a new drama on the same story, in which the Thessalian king

has learned from Apollo to try to revive the golden age by a reign of strict justice and pure benevolence. The warning that he shall die and not live grieves him most for the sake of others ; but also it seems to him, as to Arnold's Mycerinus, hard to die just when he is a blessing to all around him, while harsh and unjust rulers live on. Then Alcestis, the partner of all his designs, insists on dying in his stead, in order that he may have time to execute them. Apollo indeed knows (being wiser than mortals) that her sacrifice is not really needed, since "No fruit man's life can bear will fade" without leaving a seed whence shall spring yet better fruit in time to come ; but still he permits it. Admetus at first rejects his wife's offer :

" Let purposes of Zeus fulfil themselves,
 If not through me, then through some other man !
 Still, in myself he had a purpose too,
 Inalienably mine, to end with me :
 This purpose—that throughout my earthly life,
 Mine should be mingled and made up with thine,—
 And we two prove one force, and play one part,
 And do one thing. Since death divides the pair,
 'Tis well that I depart and thou remain
 Who wast to me as spirit is to flesh :
 Let the flesh perish, be perceived no more,
 So thou, the spirit that informed the flesh,
 Bend yet awhile, a very flame above
 The rift I drop into the darkness by,—
 And bid remember, flesh and spirit once
 Worked in the world, one body, for man's sake.
 Never be that abominable show
 Of passive death without a quickening life—
 Admetus only, no Alcestis now."

But Alcestis bids him remember that as he would not hesitate to die himself in order to achieve his great designs, so he should beware of choosing less nobly for his wife, "letting die" "all true life that lived in both of us."

" "Look at me once ere thou decree the lot !"
 Therewith her whole soul entered into his ;
 He looked the look back, and Alcestis died.
 And even while it lay, i' the look of him,
 Dead, the dimmed body, bright Alcestis' soul
 Had penetrated through the populace
 Of ghosts, was got to Koré,—throned and crowned
 The pensive queen o' the twilight, where she dwells
 For ever in a muse, but half away
 From flowery earth she lost and hankers for,—
 And there demanded to become a ghost
 Before the time.

Whereat the softened eyes
 Of the lost maidenhood that lingers still
 Straying among the flowers in Sicily,

Searched at a glance Alcestis to the soul,
 And said *
 'Hence, thou deceiver! This is not to die,
 If, by the very death which mocks me now,
 The life, that's left behind and past my power,
 Is formidably doubled.' "

Then follows one of Browning's ingenious comparisons between two half-armed athletes, one of whom should quit the combat, without leave, to complete his friend's equipment, and Admetus, as he is now, and as he would be when reinforced by his wife's spirit; a comparison worked out too wordily for the "pensive queen of twilight," the Proserpine (recalled by Browning's descriptions, but effaced by the speech he invents for her) of whom Dante, Shakspeare, and Milton have each sung in such enrapturing strains; but leading to this conclusion,—

"Two souls in one were formidable odds :
 Admetus must not be himself and thou ;'
 And so, before the embrace relaxed a whit,
 The lost eyes opened, still beneath the look ;
 And lo Alcestis was alive again."

A noble version of the story, but undramatic. Its personages are too wise to interest very deeply. Not in strength unmixed with weakness, in goodness without a taint of evil, in wisdom undashed with folly, does the drama find its materials. Our pity cannot be excited, our fears awakened, by the impersonations of abstract qualities. For, if grand, they are not human; and to touch man's heart he needs to have exhibited before him like passions with his own—the temptations, struggles, sins, and griefs of man, not the passionless elevation of some superior being.

Still, if to Browning, as to most others, it is easier to point out, than to correct, what is amiss, we must nevertheless acknowledge him as the pleasantest guide who ever accompanied us through a Greek play. His remarks, always acute and interesting, are well worthy of consideration even when they do not win (which yet they oftenest gain) the full assent of our judgment. Where he falls most palpably short, the defect arises from that strong preference of truth to beauty, which reveals itself in the book before us (less often than in his previous works, however) by uncalled-for intrusions of the grotesque; and (to mention a small though irritating instance) by deformities like "*Olympian*," "*Lubian*," and the rest of the restorations of Greek spelling in proper names, which we have carefully avoided copying in our citations. We are disposed to rate the author of *Balaustion* higher as an interpreter than as a translator; and to prefer its original portions to the version of Euripides which it con-

* How the *eyes* could say the many words, of which we only extract a few, Mr. Browning may be better able than we to explain.

tains. For Browning's verse, at all times more remarkable for vigour than for harmony, refuses to echo the complex musical effects on which so much depends in the Greek drama; his sympathy with his author is, of necessity, an imperfect one; and his mind lacks repose, and is altogether of a too un-Hellenic cast to transmit to us the white light of ancient tragedy through an uncoloured medium.

Now exactly where Browning is defective, the author of the "*Atalanta in Calydon*" brings us a supply in over measure. He enters to a blameable excess into that antique shrinking from death, which is too little understood in *Balaustion*; so far from judging his personages by the standard of an advanced age, he does not view them at all as moral agents, but merely as the "fools of fate;" and, whatever else his choric strains may lack, they are never deficient in melodious sweetness. Thus the English reader who should fuse in his mind the principal characteristics of the two books which we have been considering (correcting minor points, such as the introduction of rhyme, by the recollection of Arnold's *Merope*), would gain some approximate notion of the tragedy of Euripides. If he is still unsatisfied, he must learn Greek and read the originals for himself: on every account, where practicable, by far the wisest course. For, as we have tried here and there to show, the most essential beauties here, even more than in other poets, are in the strictest sense incapable of being translated. The writer in another language can only indicate them to the discerning.

And certainly, as we have said already, it is to those who know the ancient classics best that restorations and translations of the antique, like those which we have been considering, give the most pleasure. For they sharpen their perception of the beauty, which it proves so difficult to reproduce; while, by keeping the eye long fixed upon it, they enable it to unfold itself to its gaze. They call them to unlock once more that long and noble gallery, the key to which they won years ago, but which want of leisure forbids some men to re-enter often without a special summons; and they supply a reason for indulging in the delightful employment of walking slowly from group to group, and from statue to statue, of its glorious sculptures. Who can wonder if, when the time for departure comes, the eye rests rather severely at first on the modern antiques in the antechamber? And yet (so varied are the movements of the human mind) we learn to love them too, alike for what they are in themselves, and for the vision of beauty which they recall to us; they begin to shine in our eyes with a double light—their own lustre and a borrowed and greater splendour,—the bas-relief, wrought with care and skill beneath a cold northern sky, becoming suffused with the roseate glow of that dawn which flushes the white marbles of Pentelicus and the waters of Ilissus.

MEMOIRS OF A CYNIC.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CONTRASTS."

I.

ON the evening of the sixtieth anniversary of my birthday, the labours of the day being over, according to custom I took up a book to amuse myself with a couple of hours' reading before retiring to bed. The work I had taken up was the autobiography of Sir Thomas Bramston, K.B., a book attractive enough in itself, but which, on this occasion, did not claim my attention for more than a few minutes. Indeed, I had hardly finished the first paragraph before I closed the book to ruminate at my leisure over the train of thoughts it had conjured up. "Among the manie reason that historians give for the resignation of the Emperor Charles the Fifth," the paragraph said, "the words of an old and good officer under him are not of the lightest moment, whoe, desiring leave of the Emperor to depart and be dismist from his employment, the Emperor would needes know the reason moveinge him thereto, whoe replied, *Inter negotia vite et horam mortis debet esse spatium.*"

This sentence impressed me all the more, that I had been for some time reflecting whether I had not arrived at that age when a man, without incurring the stigma of idleness, may legitimately retire from active employment, and spend the remainder of his days in peace and quietude. The reply of the old officer seemed to confirm me in the conclusion I had already partly arrived at, that I might reasonably do so; and before seeking my bed that evening I determined to act upon it.

Should the reader consider that with a sound mind and good constitution I was not justified in devoting the remainder of my days to unprofitable ease, I beg in reply to submit that there were several extenuating circumstances in my case. In the first place I am unfortunately an old bachelor. I advisedly make use of the word "unfortunately," for Heaven knows I would willingly have married. The cause of my disappointment and my continued celibacy I will relate hereafter. Moreover, I have no relatives, and but few friends. Without being rich, I have economised sufficient to live during the rest of my life, if not in splendour, at least in ease, and at my death shall be able to leave something behind me, if not for the good of my own soul, at least for the worldly comfort and consolation of the sick and afflicted. Perhaps I may be able to leave, too, some solid memorials of my gratitude for those to whom I am under obligation, although, I am sorry to say, of these last there are but few now living.

Unfortunately my retirement from the active duties of life was not altogether attended with the results I had anticipated. Instead of enjoy-

ing my *otium cum dignitate* I experienced a far less classical result, and found myself mortally *ennuied*. This feeling gradually increased to such an extent that, at last, I found it absolutely necessary to seek some rational occupation for my mind, for utter inactivity began to have a most prejudicial effect on my nervous system. Nor, considering the active life I had previously led, was this much to be wondered at.

Possibly I cannot better commence my narrative than by giving the reader a very short sketch of my life, which also, to a certain degree, will lead to a better comprehension of my purpose in undertaking my present task.

During the sixty years of my life I have played many more parts than those mentioned by Shakespeare. I was left an orphan before I was eight years of age, and was placed under the (nominal) guardianship of my paternal uncle. At the age of sixteen I was entered as midshipman in the old East India Company's service, but two years afterwards I was obliged to leave from ill-health. My guardian then suggested I should enter one of the learned professions, but thinking my education for either Law, Physic, or Divinity had not been sufficiently matured, he placed me under the care of a private tutor, a man of very brilliant reputation, for the three years before I came of age. Without self-flattery I may conscientiously state that I did no discredit to my tutor. I acquired a really good classical education, based on what I had already learned at school, and also became a very fair mathematician. One year of the three I resided in Paris with my tutor, who, being himself an excellent French scholar (an accomplishment among private tutors even more rare then than in the present day), took great care to perfect me in the language, till at last I could both speak and write it correctly.

On coming of age I found I was cursed with an independence of four hundred a year, though possibly the reader may imagine that an inheritance of the kind should be spoken of in a more respectful manner. I regret the diversity of opinion between us, but still hold to my own. Four hundred a year, instead of stimulating a young man of education to exertion, as in my own case, is too frequently an inducement to idleness, while it is, on the other hand, insufficient to maintain him and a family in the luxury in which he has been accustomed to live. If he marries and is good for anything, he then for the first time attempts energetically to exert himself, and generally fails. I often think over the number of young men I have met with in my life, who, inheriting four or five hundred a year, have fallen into poverty before their, generally, early deaths.

To return to my own narrative. No sooner did I find myself in possession of my four hundred a year, than I threw over for the moment (as I endeavoured to convince myself) the idea of at once entering either of the learned professions. I determined that I would first see the world for a year, and then settle down steadily to work. The portion of the world I saw during that year was comprised in the city

of Milan, a few of the surrounding towns, and Lake Como. Finding at the end of the year that my cosmopolitan experience was hardly sufficiently extensive, I dedicated another year to Venice and Florence. The third and fourth I passed in Rome and Naples; then I returned northwards, and remained another year in Milan. In this manner I remained till nine years had passed over my head, never leaving Italy the whole of the time. I lived in a sort of luxurious idleness, studying a variety of subjects, but arrived at proficiency in none. I made no enemies, and but few friends, and my life passed away as happily, or at least as free from pain or care, as is possible in this world.

And then came two terrible incidents which changed the whole current of my life. In one, death took from me the only girl I had ever really loved, for although I had often and often imagined myself in love, the attachment I had formed for that dear one, proved that all the others, by comparison, had been little better than the idle freaks of a passing hour. The other event was the news of the death of my guardian, accompanied by the intelligence that he had not only died penniless, but that twelve years before, to recoup himself for a bad speculation, he had most dishonestly possessed himself of the whole of my property, selling it, and investing the proceeds in a government annuity of £600 a year on his own life, out of which he regularly transmitted to me every quarter-day one hundred pounds.

The terrible blow I had received before this intelligence reached me considerably diminished the shock I should otherwise have felt in thus suddenly discovering I was penniless. From considering myself a man of property I now found I was left with hardly sufficient money to pay my travelling expenses to England. On my arrival I found that the information I had received respecting my uncle's affairs was perfectly true, and I had now only my own exertions to rely on for support. What steps could I take? I could not dig, to beg I was ashamed. I had never yet earned a shilling, nor had I any idea even how to begin. Without help I could do nothing, so I looked about for it. I had only two relatives in England, and their relationship was too distant (they were half-brothers of my poor mother) to hold out much hope in applying to them. I had not heard from them for many years, and was only assured of their existence on referring to the "Post Office Directory." One, who had been educated as a barrister, I found had been for some years past employed on the public press. The other was a physician in moderate practice, and both were confirmed bachelors. Contrary to my expectation, these relatives received me with great kindness—the one connected with the press obtaining for me employment on his own newspaper.

If the first thirty years of my life were passed in comparative idleness, or at least unremunerative employment, not so the latter half. During the whole time I continued on the public press (and few men in that occupation had been more industrious), I passed through

almost every phase of the profession. I commenced as a reporter at the police courts; then wrote theatrical reports (always a favourite occupation of mine) for a Sunday paper. My knowledge of Italian and music afterwards obtained for me the appointment of musical and operatic critic for a fashionable morning paper; and then I was admitted as reporter into the gallery of the House of Commons. I have also on two occasions been a special war correspondent. Getting older, I turned my mind to writing leading articles, occasionally using my pen in other branches of literature. According to time-hallowed custom I ought perhaps here to state that my services had been underpaid; but conscientiously speaking this is not the case. On the contrary, I have always been fairly remunerated; and if I have not contrived to amass a fortune, at least I have been able to live in comfort.

When I was a young man press-writing was a very different affair from what it is at the present day. Gross personality then passed for wit, and vulgar abuse for sarcasm. At the same time this state of things was not without excuse. The touch of the gentler good-humoured sarcasm of the present day would not have been felt by the thick-skinned gentry, for whose reformation it was specially intended. Among all classes it was the same. The last of the Georges was then on the throne, and the abuses in every grade of society or public department, whether army, navy, pulpit, bar, or stage, were, according to our present views of right and wrong, perfectly astounding. Notwithstanding all the stereotyped cant about the high independent feeling of the British nation, I believe things would be in as bad a state to-day, had it not been for the incessant Herculean labours of the public press. Do not imagine, however, that the journalists' task was simply to point out an abuse, and that the nation immediately eradicated it, for that was far from being the case. Day after day, week after week, year after year, did the press point out to the nation the horrible despotism they were subjected to before the public would stir in the matter.

The enormous injustice and abuse which were then common in ecclesiastical affairs, seem now almost incredible. With one exception, the whole bench of bishops were advocates for negro slavery, and defended that "peculiar institution" so warmly, that Lord Eldon argued that there was nothing in it contrary to the principles of Christianity, or the reverend lords would not have supported it in the consistent manner they did. I remember two bishops being pointed out to me who had received their mitres from our English Pope, George the Fourth, while Regent, through the direct patronage of Court ladies of very indifferent reputation. One archbishop had accumulated so great a fortune from his See, that he was enabled on one new year's day to present each of his grandchildren, fifty-two in number, with one thousand pounds; and that with little perceptible diminution of his fortune. Another bishop had given to different members of his family church livings to the amount of thirty-two

thousand a year, without exciting the slightest scandal or disapprobation in the mind of the pure head of the only true church, by Act of Parliament established, that most religious and gracious King, George the Fourth. Another bishop lived for many years abroad in the house of a woman of disgraceful reputation. All his revenues, which were immense, he spent away from England, neglecting, with perfect impunity, the whole care of his diocese.

It required no little courage, I can assure you, on the part of the press to attack the abuses of the Church alone. A tacit understanding seemed to exist between it and the law to allow these infamies to be carried on unchallenged. The law legalised every injustice committed by the Church on condition that it had its share in the patronage; and the Church sanctified and absolved every legal infamy, provided it had for one of its objects the welfare of the Church temporalities; while the Crown stepped in and gave its sanction to both, thus forming a trinity of scandal which could not have been surpassed for bare-faced injustice and wickedness in the worst era of the Roman Catholic Church. That things in the Church are vastly changed for the better I am perfectly ready to admit; still, even in late years, the world has witnessed acts perpetrated with impunity, if not with praise, which future generations may stigmatise as infamous. For the welfare of the rich we have seen, in this capital city of ours, Christ's legatees—the poor—robbed of their inheritance, and the vast sums left for their education applied to the benefit of those who are perfectly able to pay for the advantages they receive. And all this is not only legalised by the law, but not unfrequently the very acts of spoliation themselves are blessed by our Church dignitaries.*

In the law, army, and navy, abuses existed scarcely less enormous

* A vast change for the better appears certainly to be looming in the distance, and the metropolitan public seem awakening to the extraordinary acts of injustice which, for the last thirty years, have been perpetrated without molestation. The press-writers also seem buckling on their armour for the fight; and when once they take a matter seriously in hand they generally succeed. But an abuse is still open which necessitates the utmost caution and supervision—the delays and legal expenses incurred in getting these reformations through the Court of Chancery. As a specimen of the expense attending a litigation of the kind in that Court, may be quoted the present condition of the new scheme concerning the "prison charities." It having been determined that numerous small charities existing in the city of London for the benefit of prisoners for debt should be consolidated, and the gross proceeds, amounting to the yearly sum of £2,700, should be applied to some charitable use, an admirable scheme was drawn up for the purpose by the present Attorney-General, Sir J. Coleridge. The Vice-Chancellor, to whom it was submitted, did not however approve of it, and a fresh scheme had to be drawn up. At the present moment each of the different parishes and acting trustees interested in the matter (some of them to an amount not exceeding five pounds a year), have put in a claim of their own for the consideration of the Court. What prospect there may be of a speedy and economical termination can be judged from the fact, that there are at present no fewer than thirty-five solicitors' firms engaged in superintending the interests of their different clients.

than those in the Church. Still, the press went on, and, to a considerable extent, conquered, in spite of the continued threats, on the part of the law of severe punishment in this world, and on the part of the Church of eternal perdition in the next. And yet all the time those at the head of these abuses called themselves the most virtuous and respectable portion of the nation; and the rest believed them, and appeared almost to idolize them for the very impudence of the position they assumed.

Brooding over these dark reminiscences I determined, after my retirement, to write a work, and, if possible, of an original character. After great consideration I hit upon a notion which I believed would be perfectly novel, and which for some time found great favour in my eyes. It was to write a "Predicted History of England," from the passing of the Reform and Catholic Emancipation bills to the present time. I had called to mind an immense number of the predictions of what would be the fate of England did certain measures at different times before the House pass into law. After all, perhaps, I am hardly entitled to the credit of originality in the idea, for I may have taken it from my uncle the Editor, who had amused himself in making a collection of predictions uttered by eminent statesmen, divines, and judges, all of whom were imagined at the time to be oracles of little less than infallible wisdom.* I soon, however, gave up the attempt. The work was amusing enough at the beginning, and afforded considerable facilities for very pointed satire; but as I went on with it so many different elements of difficulty presented themselves, and these of so contradictory a description, that I was obliged to relinquish my task in despair. Every new project contained, as was predicted by the proposer, the elements of infinite good, no matter whether in foreign policy or home legislation; while the Opposition discovered in it the most destructive and prejudicial effects if carried into execution. Connected with the two Acts of Parliament I have named, predictions of the most alarming description were showered forth by the Tories. Before the end of the first two years of my History I had accumulated no fewer than seventy-nine "saps in the very foundation of the British constitution in Church and State;" and all these pointed out by legislators, noblemen, and other authorities of the most profound wisdom. The evils likely to fall on the nation went on accumulating till I could plainly perceive that before the end of ten years the whole country would be annihilated, or all that would remain of it would be the city of London in a proper state of dilapidation for the reception of the New Zealander whose advent has been so often and so loudly proclaimed.

After having put aside my "Predicted History of England," the

* I may possibly make use of some of my uncle's collection of celebrated predictions in a future chapter. They ranged from the passing of the Romilly bill for the abolition of punishment of death for stealing in a shop to the amount of five shillings, to the end of the first twenty years of the present century.

demon of *ennui* tyrannised over me to such an extent that I was obliged to seek for some occupation. At last I decided on commencing my autobiography. I determined, after mature consideration, to divide it into two parts—the first thirty years or idle portion of my life forming the one; the time I was engaged in the public press the other. In the former my experiences of life were of the gayer description; the latter, as a rule, the more serious, though in both many exceptions occurred. Frequently pathetic episodes would mix themselves up with the ridiculous in my earlier years; and in my later, the absurd would often mingle with the serious. Whether I shall afterwards submit the whole to publication remains to be seen.

II.

HAVING admitted in the former chapter that I was of a cynical disposition, I must say that I believe it to have been more the effect of education than a natural tendency. I might almost aver that there are few of a more serious temperament than I am, or who dwell with greater interest on the pathetic. From my earliest childhood, however, the ridiculous has thrust itself into every action of my life, and that in direct opposition to my will. I have been haunted through my whole existence by the absurd, and that without the slightest power on my own part to avoid it. Even in religious matters I can detect the same tendency. I have ever entertained the greatest respect for religion and its ministers, yet, almost with my earliest notions of a Deity, the ridiculous has mixed itself up more or less. It may appear singular to the reader that I was possessed of any religious feeling, and I should even have doubted the fact myself, were I not able to recall my very first conception of the Deity. And with this reminiscence not the slightest particle of the ridiculous is mixed. Nay more, it is the earliest circumstance I can remember, and the greater portions of it are at present as vividly painted on my memory as at the time they occurred. I must then have been about six years of age, as my mother, who died two years before my father, was in her last illness. I had been guilty of some infantile peccadillo—possibly appropriating some delicacy to my own use, to which I was not entitled. But of one thing I am certain, that when accused of my crime I stoutly and unhesitatingly denied it. The evidence against me, however, was overwhelming, and I was brought up before my poor mother for judgment. I can see her now before me as she sat up in bed, supported by pillows, calmly remonstrating with me on the wickedness of a lie, and showing me God's anger at a sin of the kind. As I remained obstinate, however, under her admonitions, she placed me at the foot of the bed as a punishment, where I was to remain till I came to a better frame of mind. In a few minutes this occurred: I burst into tears and ran round to the side of the bed, begging her forgiveness. She, in return, clasped me in her arms and kissed me, and wept scarcely less plentifully than I did myself.

This was the last reminiscence I had of my mother, for I do not think I ever saw her again. In that one interview, however, I had thoroughly conceived the possibility of the existence of a being who could love fondly, and at the same time punish. I have since, in reflecting on this power of a mother over her child, and in watching its effects on other children, come to the conclusion that not only had I received from my mother a knowledge of the two attributes of the Deity already mentioned, but that I had also received from her the idea of Omnipotence—a power that could protect me from all evil; of Omniscience—for I believed she knew all; and faith—for I could not have doubted a word she told me, no matter how abstruse the theology concealed in the childish question I might put to her.

After the death of my mother, I and my brother, two years my junior, were placed under the care of my paternal grandmother. And here, unlike the pure theology I had obtained from my mother, the absurd began to mix itself up with my ideas, not at the time, certainly, for I was merely puzzled by her arguments, but as I grew older and was better able to analyse them. My grandmother was an exceedingly spiteful old woman, and yet proud of her piety. I believe if I had placed the same faith in her as I had done in my mother, I should have been about as cruel and vindictive a character as it would be possible to imagine. Her ideas of resignation were singular in the extreme. No person ever offended her that she did not use every means in her power to seek retaliation. If she were unable to obtain any, she had one "pious" remark ready for the occasion—"No matter, they will suffer for it hereafter, that's one blessing." She was particularly fond of applying Scripture or theological arguments, even to the commonest events of life. The Church Catechism of course was instilled into us. It was, in her idea more essential to salvation than even the Scriptures themselves. Oh! how fearfully were my brother and I punished if we had not learnt a certain portion of it every day. Moreover, she had an abominable habit of examining us on the meaning of the questions and answers, and severe indeed were the punishments we received if our replies were not satisfactory. When my poor brother was between five and six years of age, I remember his being called up for his first examination on the Catechism. After replying correctly enough to the first question, he broke down at the second. When asked, "Who gave you that name?" his reply was "My Godfathers and my Godmothers in my baptism, wherein I——"

"Stop," said my grandmother; "do you know what is meant by your baptism?"

"Yes," said my brother.

"Explain it," said the old lady.

Laying his hand on the pit of his stomach he looked in her face and said: "This is my baptism."

I forget what punishment he had given him, but if it was not a

severe one in proportion to his fault, it was the only one she ever awarded us that was not.

What makes the old lady's behaviour appear still more atrocious, was the way in which she used to escape from difficult theological questions we put to her. And here I may state that children occasionally do put theological questions that would puzzle far greater authorities than my old grandmother to answer. Her usual reply to all questions she found difficult was: "By faith, my dear." Nor was this solely confined to questions or discourses on theological subjects. She would occasionally bring it in on others purely mundane when she had any difficulty in replying, for she insisted on the ultramontane infallibility of her own wisdom. I remember once, when nearly eight years of age, reading to her in Goldsmith's "Roman History," about one of the mythical kings of Rome who had a difference of opinion with an augur. To a statement of the augur the king replied—

"Why, you might as well tell me that I could cut through this whetstone with a razor."

"Cut boldly," replied the augur. And the king cut it through accordingly.

"How did he do that, grandmamma?" I asked.

"By faith, my dear," said the old lady.

But after all, even in the present day, half a century later, with the many modifications and improvements which have taken place in the spiritual instruction of children, occasionally circumstances crop up which prove that if the word "faith" is not brought forward with the same frequency as it was by my grandmother, other words scarcely less inappropriate are used. Not long since, shortly after the illness of the Prince of Wales, I entered, with the ladies of a family I was visiting in —shire, a National School, in which my hostess took an especial pride, and of which she was one of the best patronesses. By way of proving the excellency of the instruction taught in it she requested the teacher to give me some examples of the ability of the children. The teacher, nothing loth, ranged them on the rising forms one above another till all were in their places. Some of the usual questions were then put by the teacher, and the children, who of course had answered them fifty times before, gave their replies in a perfectly satisfactory manner. My hostess was then asked if she would like to put some questions to them. This she readily did, and being naturally of a most patriotic temperament, she asked,—

"Why should we love the Prince of Wales?"

The whole of the children for some moments seemed perfectly incapable of replying. The teacher, alarmed for the credit of the school, then addressed the children seriously, telling them they ought to think over the question, and that those who considered themselves capable of answering were to hold up their hands. After a minute's silence three of them extended their arms to signify that they were prepared with replies.

"Tommy," she said, addressing a chubby-faced little boy; "you answer first, 'Why should we love the Prince of Wales?'"

"Because he was good, and took his physic, and got well," was the reply, with a tone of assurance which seemed to say, "deny that if you can."

To his great astonishment however, this reply did not satisfy the teacher, and she then put the question to the next pupil. The boy remained silent and perplexed for some moments, and then said,—

"Please, teacher, I forget."

"Mary, my dear," said the teacher, addressing a prim little girl; "Why should we love the Prince of Wales?"

"By prayer," replied Mary, with a sanctity and solemnity of tone which seemed to reprobate the behaviour of her two male fellow-pupils.

I could quote examples of the kind by hundreds, though possibly not one I might mention would be more absurd than different instances which have come under the reader's own notice, all tending to show how absurdly are the beautiful principles of the Christian religion instilled into the minds of children by the incapacity of their teachers. One instance, however, I cannot refrain from quoting, so perfect in its way does it appear to me. I one day visited, for the purpose of collecting information for a newspaper article, the magnificent Reformatory Schools for Criminal Boys, at ——. So admirable were all the arrangements connected with the establishment that I at first imagined it would be impossible to find anything in it either to blame or ridicule, or that the absurd could in any manner be mixed up with it. However, even there I found in one instance the sublime and the ridiculous mingled in an extraordinary manner with the theological. In going over the building with the chaplain, he noticed that a certain pupil was absent from the workshops, and on making inquiries respecting him, was informed that he had been rebellious at work that morning, and as a punishment had been, by order of the Governor, placed in a solitary cell for the remainder of the day. The Governor had left word with the superintendent of the workshop that when the chaplain should make his usual round, his attention should be called to the subject, so that he might reason with the boy on the impropriety of his conduct. On leaving the workshop the chaplain said to me,—

"If you have no objection we will see the boy at once, and then you will be able to judge of the nature of our punishments, and satisfy yourself that they are rather moral than physical."

Accompanied by the warder we now entered a corridor, and a door being opened we saw in a cell a boy of perhaps thirteen years of age, who appeared as truculent a little monkey as could well be imagined. After all, perhaps, it was less the fault of the poor child than the life he had been compelled to lead. Possibly the only instruction he had received before his entrance into the school had been to "move on," for the chaplain told me he was, on his arrival,

as ignorant as the beasts of the field, and hardly aware of the common decencies of life. He scowled at us as we entered the cell, but remained silent.

"So I hear," said the chaplain, "you have been a naughty boy this morning, and have refused to obey the orders of the superintendent of the workshop. Nor is this the first time you have been guilty of such faults. Nobody wishes to be unkind to you or to punish you, but discipline must be maintained. Now promise me you will behave better for the future, and thus relieve us from the necessity of punishing you, which I assure you we do with great pain."

The worthy chaplain's tone, more perhaps than even his words, seemed to have a wonderful effect on the child. His sulky look vanished, and he began to cry.

"Now tell me," said the chaplain, "why are you so naughty?"

"I can't help it, sir," he replied. "It's not my fault."

"Whose fault is it, then?" asked the chaplain.

"It's my original sin, sir," replied the boy.

"Your original sin!" said the chaplain. "Nonsense; what do you mean by that? You do not know what you are talking about."

"Yes, sir," said the boy; "it's my original sin, and it breaks out all over me, legs and all."

So saying, he pulled up his trousers and showed us a strong cutaneous eruption on the legs, which had doubtless made the poor child fractious. He evidently, by way of accounting to himself for his mutinous behaviour, had collected together some scraps of the theological teaching he had received, and condensed them into the conclusion that it was his original sin which had caused the eruption on his legs, thus compelling him to be mutinous against his own inclination.

To return to my own adventures. My brother and I continued our unhappy life with our grandmother for nearly two years. In the daytime we attended a small school in the neighbourhood, spending our evenings and mornings at home. School hours have generally but little attraction for children of our age, but with us it was different, for so unattractive was home, we found the schoolroom preferable. Things went on in this manner till at the end of the two years a circumstance occurred which greatly shocked me, and which was the cause of my altering to a considerable degree the dislike I had taken to my grandmother.

At the time of my mother's death my father was suffering from ill-health. The shock her decease caused him increased his malady, and very serious symptoms began to develop themselves. Physicians of the first eminence were called in, who said he must leave England immediately, or consumption would supervene. This for him was not as great a difficulty as might have been imagined. He was a junior partner in a large wholesale wine merchant's house, carrying on an extensive business with Madeira. It was now decided that he should

visit that island, and remain there in connection with the firm for twelve months. And this was the immediate cause of our being placed under the care of our grandmother. The year passed on, and the reports we received of his health were of a somewhat favourable character. Still, the progress he had made was so small that it was considered advisable he should remain another year. Alas! the favourable promise held out at the end of the first year was not realized. Six months afterwards we were informed that a relapse had taken place, and serious symptoms had appeared which gave great cause for anxiety. The following month my grandmother received a letter from him, stating, that as he was now assured his malady was incurable, he proposed returning to England that he might die in the midst of his family. This intelligence was a source of great sorrow to my grandmother, and indeed to us all, although scarcely as much to my brother and myself as might have been expected. We knew, in fact, but little of him, as we were too young at the time of his leaving England to have any very great knowledge of his good qualities, and the letters we had received from him hardly conveyed a favourable impression to our minds, for they all spoke in high terms of our grandmother, and contained numerous injunctions that we should obey her in every respect. If they contained anything else she withheld it from us.

It was now time for my father's arrival in England, and yet we received no intelligence of him. My grandmother's uneasiness at the delay became so great that she positively forgot to maintain her severe discipline over us. Nay, more, she even went so far as to show us more kindness than she had ever yet done—and that, after all, was little indeed. At length a letter reached her, written in an unknown hand, and dated from Southampton. It was from the agent of the ship, and stated that it was with great regret he had to inform her that my father had died during the voyage to England, and that his body had been committed to the deep. I was in the room when my grandmother read this letter. The first effect it had on her was to bring on a half-fainting fit, from which she recovered, and then went into violent hysterics. Her screams brought the servants into the room, and I was then sent out. It was long before she recovered from the fit—her sorrow, I believe, continued unabated till her death. I remember the effect she produced on me the evening she received this letter. She was walking to and fro in the parlour, her hands clasped together, the tears coursing each other rapidly down her face, while she ejaculated from time to time, "My God, my God, what shall I do!" From that moment to the present, when my mind reverts to the old lady, this last scene starts forward, and completely neutralises in my mind all the anger and aversion her despotic conduct had engendered in my breast.

(To be continued.)

A SHORT VACATION.

I'd vowed this month I'd dedicate
To somewhat sterner metre ;—
My theme I'd "strictly meditate,"
And make mankind discreeter ;
Alas ! I have but proved again
How plans and practice vary ;
I left the lyre and took the train—
Humanum est errare !

I said, to "live laborious days"
One needs a change of diet,—
No man the "spirit clear" can "raise"
Without pure air and quiet ;
I fancy now my Muse prefers
A climate *not* so airy ;
You can't foresee these whims of hers—
Humanum est errare !

'Tis plain that that austerer song,—
More anger's birth than pity's,—
Proceeds alone from men who long
Have drawn thick breath in cities ;
And yet, who knows ? This Muse of mine
May try some new vagary ;—
I won't go back—for all the Nine,—
Humanum est errare !

But oh ! for that misguided world
Whom none can now enlighten
Since I on shingly beach am curled,
Inglorious, at Brighton !
Nor I alone, but here *you* are,—
I wish you'd fan me, Mary,
And find me out a fresh cigar—
Humanum est errare !

AUSTIN DOBSON.

PAUL TEMPLAR:

A PROSE IDYLL

THIRTY YEARS AGO! And now as the wild, grey sky is fast glooming to utter darkness, and the ragged clouds, urged on by the mad North-East wind, are hurrying across the smooth face of heaven, and I feel all the chill and depression of the dying hour of day palling upon my soul,—I bring to memory this night thirty years ago. A night so like to this one—as wild, as cold, as joy-killing, with just such a grey-clouded, harsh-breath'd sunset, the sun unseen, its heat unfelt, and all Nature shuddering because the Angel of the North had wrapped it in his deadly embrace.

The Shadow of that night hath ever since been round me: I have dwelt in it, walked in it, worked in it, and out of it have been evolved, for good or evil, all the issues of my life.

Thirty years ago, this November day, I, PAUL TEMPLAR, son of a Yorkshire farmer, living far up near the Durham border, inwards a mile or two from the great eternal rocks that breast the waves of the Northern sea, had wandered to some familiar caverns, deep under the jutting cliffs, where I loved to sit and hear the sea bellowing through the resounding vaults, or hearken to the curlew's scream, or watch the scurrying gales as they whirled past thick and misty—while through and above it all rolled the ceaseless noises of the distant waves, murmuring in their deepest tones and clapping their hands to God.

A queer, bookish fellow was I, not overloved of my father, who strengthened his hands and loins to win his bread, and little cared for my idle fingers and mooning brains about his house. But he had to yield to the necessity of my laziness. I was deformed in the shoulders, and my pale face marked me out as a weakling, from four brawny, Herculean youths who were the pride of our homestead. How much they four loved and pitied me! How gentle were they to their 'gentleman brother,' as they used to call me—given to books and lounging, while they worked hard and sweatfully, tending and forcing the fitful, often too thankless, soil, under the invidious sky.

My mother was dead—died in bearing me.

Noblest of these noble brothers was the eldest. I see him now, Harold, with his great ruddy face, the broad forehead, and the curly auburn hair, and the brown eyes, deep and lustrous, and the well-knit, massive form.

I see too that fair girl he brought from Devon, whither he went to serve his farm apprenticeship, flaxen-haired, blue-eyed, coral-

lipped beauty that she was, and so tender and fragile, our big folk for a while looked at her with gentle awe, knowing not what to do with her or how to entreat her. As if some rare Dresden vase had fallen into the hands of brutish hinds, who recognized only its beauty, not its use, and cherished it fearfully, with a feeling something between worship and wonder.

Fondly did I love Eva, with a pure brotherly love—and more fondly still I loved Eveline, the double image of her father and mother, the pet of all our hearts.

And it is of these two, that, recalling the events of this night thirty years ago, the bright, fair figures stand out to my eyes as real as at the time, against that background of grey and black and stormy eve. O bright, fair figures, long since translated and transfigured, where my eyes can no more behold your beauty !

The morning had risen as glum and cold as the evening afterwards went out. Fast drove the steel-shaded clouds, harsh was the voice and angry the breath of the wind. A sort of day I loved much, when I could get down on the shore behind some rock, and shelter myself from the chilling blasts. Eva intended to go to N—, a town twelve miles off, down in a little vale, that carried a small stream to the sea, where a few houses and fishermen's huts sheltered a community quaint and quiet ; living mostly on the trade done with the surrounding thinly-populated district. Part of the way was over a hill, nearly four miles from our house, and along its top, where it was scarp'd away in a huge Titanic break straight down to the sea. Great rocks jutted out here and there, and many a cave and fissure pitted its black face ; below, was a pavement of tremendous fragments strewn and piled with the strengthful abandon of Nature, among which the high tide surged and boiled and hissed. Over this hill, down again to a valley and then along the shore round the next headland went the road to N—.

They had promised Eva the light, two-wheeled cart ; and Eveline, who was to have a new dress, the main object of the journey, was to accompany her. A farmer's wife thinks little of such an excursion, and, though the giants humorously warned Eva, at breakfast, of the roughness of the day, they never thought of dissuading her from the drive. I offered to go with her as far as the cliff, about four miles, taking with me my dinner and some books, and to await her return in the early afternoon. So Harold brought round the cart, with the patient old mare, and lifted in Eva and Eveline, and last of all, in the wantonness of strength, me, amidst jokes and laughter. And away we went. . . .

I wandered about above and below, and by and by sat down secure in a favourite cave, reached by a path from the top, which only a light body and cunning hands and feet could safely use. My eyes, weary with reading, had been resting sleepily on the weird, troubled

scene beyond ; my ear had been lulled by the thunder of the waves on those glistening rocks. I knew not the hour, but I was so intimate with Nature, I felt sure that Eva should long since have been with me on her way home.

Twice had I gone out and struggled up to the highest point of the cliff, whence I ought to have seen her cart climbing the hill. After noon the weather had grown colder, angrier, and more gloomy. Grand indeed were the waves, with their tossing manes of snowy foam under that black sky.

As I descended the second time disappointed to my cave, I saw, with alarm, the north and east growing more desperately dark—the clouds quickened their speed to a riotous rate—and the drizzle blew cold and hard upon my face.

"Coom, Eva!" I said, "coom along soon, Eva and Eveline. Storm and night are behind ye. Coom on safe and speedily, my darlings!"

By and by the storm drove up fell and furious. O how the monster sea lashed out and roared amain! The scouring drifts of rain dashed past my cave's mouth and flung their cold drops back into my face as I shrank to the farthest end.

"Nay," said I, peering out anxiously, "God save thee, Eva. Mayst thou not leave the shelter of the cosy haven till this be over."

I grew uneasy. There was danger now, so vicious was the gale, in climbing even the few feet between me and the top; but, after waiting vainly a long time for a lull, and finding that the air grew darker and darker and the storm more fierce, I braved my heart for another effort and went up again.

Whiff—whirl—what a gust! It nearly blew me off my feet. I stood as manfully as I could, and tried to make out the line of road. I could not see a hundred yards. The mist and rain and falling darkness veiled every feature of the landscape from my sight. I listened trembling.

"God help thee!" I cried; "Oh! where art thou, Eva? O little Eveline, evangel, where are now thy little face and feet, the sunshine and the music of our home?"

At this moment I heard a shrill cry coming through the storm. It was a sea-mew surely? It seemed not far from me, and it was sharp and so inhuman.

There it was again! And now another . . . fainter, sweeping by my ears on the loud-voiced wind. I breasted the storm down the hill, shading my eyes with my hand from the blinding drift, and pressing on desperately with a strength I was unconscious of. Two hundred yards—and I heard the shriek again, more subdued, but this time quite close to me. Yet I could see nothing in the road. It was certainly the cry of a child.

"Good heavens! Am I bewitched? It is in my ear. Eva! Eveline!"

The little cry again. I looked about me. I was standing at a

well-known point of the road. Here there jutted up two great pinnacles of rock, named the Danish Twins, and the road-maker had carried his road round them on the land side. Betwixt the pinnacles, which were about twenty feet apart, was a chasm, which came up to the edge of the road, in the shape of a letter V, sloping gradually from the apex. Around its lips and sides were mingled together rocks and brushwood and broom. It sloped down some fifteen feet towards a broad ledge of rock, a vantage place sheltered by the pinnacles, where I had often stood and gazed at the glorious prospect; and then there was a sheer fall over the ledge of two hundred feet, down to the monster rocks that threw up their jagged points below.

I leaned over the lip of the upper end of the chasm, peering down through bush and brier, towards the first ledge, and then, as my eyes fell on two light objects stretched upon the ledge, with the wind and rain whirling about them, my heart nearly stopped its beat, and the breath went out of my body.

I stooped down and examined the road. 'Twas clear enough what had happened. Here was the mark of the wheel which had come too near the treacherous point of the chasm, and had broken away its crumbling apex. There just below were the bruised bushes to show how the cart had turned over—cart and horse and precious freight—and, for the rest, by some God's chance, there, before my eyes, were the two figures lying upon the ledge. As for the cart and mare

I remember how, when seeing that sight and taking into my soul all that it implied, there seemed to well up within me a fountain of devotion and resolve, such as I had never felt before. Of a sudden it was as if I had become possessed with a supernatural power. My heart grew like steel. I forgot, in the mastering enthusiasm of the moment, my poor, nerveless body; and the soul within me, big with the idea of saving those two loved and precious lives, seemed to swell with a giant's strength.

"Eva!" I shouted in the mad noise of the elements.

The larger of the two dim figures did not move. The smaller I thought I could see take an arm from the other's neck. Then it cried out piping and shrill:—

"Uncle Paul! Uncle Pau—u—u—l!"

"Eveline!" I cried, "darling Eveline, keep still for God's sake! What's mamma doing?"

"O, O, O Uncle Paul, come here!"

Down I dashed in a stupid frenzy, headlong and careless, and missing my grasp of a bush, stumbled and fell. A sharp scarp of rock received my thigh on its point, rent it down for twenty inches, and then let me drop on my back, roughly on the ledge, beside the figures.

It was many minutes before I recovered my senses. All the while the pitiless storm beat on us three. I came to myself to find Eveline with her arms round my neck, calling still, "*Uncle Paul!*"

The blood was running copiously from my wound. I tore the skirt from the little girl and bound up my thigh as well as I could. I felt that their lives depended on mine. When I turned to look at Eva, I found her lovely face pallid and wet, her clothes and hair drenched with the rain. On her right temple was a bruise. She showed no signs of life. I chafed her hands. I breathed into her cold lips. I dragged her in under some sheltering bushes and urged the little one to help me rub her mamma's hands. At length there were symptoms of life, and by and by she opened her eyes and spoke to me. She could lie there conscious, but she could not move. I knew why . . . there was a fourth, a hidden life in the balance that night.

We could now scarcely see each other's faces. I drew the child in under the brush and tied her to her mother. I besought them both not to stir hand or foot. I took off my coat and threw it over them. I buttoned my waistcoat about the little one. And then I resolved, wounded and half-naked as I was, to try and get to Winnersly, our home, for help. There was no dwelling nearer. I hoped that Harold's anxiety might bring him out in search of us, and that I should meet him on the way. By this time, what with loss of blood and the forlorn responsibility of my situation, I began to feel giddy and weak.

Then I knelt down and prayed. I know not what I said. I only know I pleaded for their precious lives—and offered my own as a ransom for them if it might be. I only know that in the course of that transcendent appeal I seemed to see new light and gain new strength, though the sharp pain in my thigh warned me that the work I had to do would task my very life. Then I kissed them both—I could no longer see their faces—and commending them to the God of the winds and storms, I essayed to climb to the top of the cliff. Into the rough bushes, among the thorny broom, grasping and letting go—feeling and doubting—step by step upward I fought my way. I forgot the anguish of my wound, in the freshness of my spirited resolve to save the dear ones below. Twice or thrice I heard Eva's gentle voice cheering me and saying—

"Are you up yet, Paul? Save us, Paul. God help you, Paul."

I kept my groans quiet, thrilling as was my pain. Twice I missed my hold and nearly fell backwards, twice recovered with bleeding hands and fainting breath, but my soul was strong and hopeful.

"God bless you, Uncle Paul! Save us, Uncle Paul. God help you, Uncle Paul!" echoed a tiny voice, and my heart leaped to hear it.

"Paul, weakling, now for a steady, determined heart. They must and shall be saved!"

At length I stood on the brink. The most dangerous part of my work was over. For the sake of their lives it had been carefully and slowly done. But the exertion left me feeble. I had to stop and adjust the bandage. The lacerated thigh was so painful, I could scarcely bear to touch it. With a grim resolution I clenched my teeth, and drew the cloth tight, until the anguish was intolerable. I hoped to stay the bleeding.

"Good God, how shall I ever do these four miles?"

I had not even a stick to lean upon, to relieve my leg. Yet I set out briskly. On my back was hurled the fury of the storm as I stumped and limped toilsomely along. Every step was a fresh agony. But every moment I seemed to hear:

"Save us, Paul! God help you, Uncle Paul!"

And it formed a sort of burden and refrain, keeping time with my trembling footsteps as I laboured along. It was so dark I could never have kept the road had it not been very familiar to me. An age seemed to have passed when I knew, by a change in the level, that I had gone only one mile. My heart began to sink, and I sat down a moment to rest. The stiffness and soreness of my wound were keenly brought home to me by the act. Could I possibly go three miles more in my present state? I ran over in my mind the difficulties of the way. There was not a hut or a house between me and home. A long piece of common, a deep dip in the road, and a hill, up which I had often bounded—these things lay before me, and here was I groaning with pain and the very life flickering in me.

"But," I said, "Harold's wife and Harold's child must be saved. Courage, Paul. *'God bless you, Paul! God help you, Uncle Paul!'*"

As I put my hand on the ground to raise myself, it lighted on a round object. I seized and felt it. It was some wayfarer's staff. He had gone on his journey, but he had left this here for me,—I thought. My spirit revived.

"Bravo, Paul! push on. God hath sent thee a staff to lean upon."

I was so encouraged that I did the next mile almost rapidly. My thoughts went back to the two poor things behind me—"Oh! shall I be in time?"—and they went on to the house before me, with the five sturdy, unconscious men, who, had they known, would have swept along this road with great rapid strides, and have borne my beauties in their giant arms home to life and warmth.

So I seemed to walk and leap and praise God for the help of the staff. But in the faith of it I was doing too much. I was using up my strength at a terrible rate. When I knew I had gone more than another mile, my steps slackened, and with my heart palpitating and my breath gone, I tumbled on the ground. The shock wrung from me an irrepressible shriek of agony.

"O via dolorosa! I cannot go on. This anguish is greater than I can bear. God himself seems pitiless, as his storm comes down so

ruthlessly, and the awful gloom drapes and stifles my ardour and my hope. *O via crucis!*"

These last words reminded me of the Great human Redeemptor. "Is it not so, ever?" I said. "Is not the way of love the way of tears?"

Here was I wailing over my own anguish, and there were the three lives, and the voices ever in my ear, yet unregarded in that moment of selfish depression. "*God help you, Uncle Paul.*" I staggered again to my feet, and with desperate slowness and patience halted along—that torn hip excruciating me at every movement.

How I got on I know not. Weakness and pain were fast subduing my zeal. So how often succumbs the noblest soul to bodily anguish! I must have become delirious. I shouted and sang—I adjured my own body to be patient—I called aloud to Heaven to help me. I said,

"They *shall* be saved, Paul. '*God help you, Paul.*'" And then I stumbled again, coming cruelly to the ground. The staff flew out of my hand, and I sank down with a groan, thinking that at last God had deserted me.

"Oh!" I said, "I had hoped that this poor, weak, and worthless life might have been redeemed from its abjectness in my brothers' sight, in my own consciousness, in God's estimation—by the saving of those three lives. Gladly then would I have lain down to die rewarded by the manly shout of my manly brothers. 'O well done, Paul. Well done!'"

But, as it seemed, it was not to be. I lay on my side unable to move. The groans I could not repress answered the wild menace of the winds, and said—"I yield ye all."

I groped for the staff. It was past recovery. Vainly I tried to get upon my feet without it. My wounded leg was now useless.

Then I was tempted to lie still there and die. The life was gradually chilling in me. My head swam. I nearly swooned. But again there came before my vision the two pictures: the precious lives to be saved, there on the ledge behind me—in front of me the noble hearts to be blessed.

"O Paul, if every step were bloody, yea with great drops of blood, and every movement a new torture, it were thy need to save them."

My heart grew stronger at the thought. I dragged myself along on hands and knees, weeping, with anguish, as I went, but praying and hoping still. . . . I cannot describe the horrors of that part of my way. A good deal of it I must have gone on unconscious. I was losing my reason. Hands and knees were bleeding. The cold driving into my exposed body made my teeth chatter. At length I swooned in good earnest. . . .

I know not how long I had lain thus, when suddenly I woke up, with a vividness that was startling. I thought I heard a terrible shriek, which pierced through swoon and deadness—to my very soul.

"*Paul, for God's sake save us, quick!*"

I could just lift my head. It was all I could do. The numb, stiff, bruised limbs, I no longer had power over them. There was only one more effort left to me. I shrieked with all my remaining strength like the voice I had heard—like a maniac: shrieked out unceasingly, the wild wind carrying away my cries from me, on its wings, God knew whither. I thought, 'I will spend my last breath to save them.' And so thinking, as my voice grew weaker and I felt myself to be dying—I concentrated my strength in one last effort—

Yes! O thank God, there was a responsive cry close at hand! Voices and lights, and in a minute or two the four strong men with Harold at their head, had reached me!

"Paul, for God's sake, Paul, what does this mean? Where are *they*?"

He had gently taken up my head, while the lantern glow fell upon my ghastly face and on my glazed eyes. I could not answer him. I simply clasped my hands in token of thankfulness.

The strong man wrung his hands.

"Give him brandy, quick. Do you know where *they* are?" I tried to nod. "He does. O Paul, wake up and tell us. Nay, look here, look *here*, brothers! How dreadful!"

They looked at my bleeding hands, then at my knees, then at the bloody wrappings round my thigh. I began to revive. In a few minutes I told them slowly where I had left Eva and Eveline.

"Where did you hurt yourself?"

"There. At the Hurry Scar, below the Twins."

"Have you come all the way like this?"

I nodded.

"O well done, Paul, bravely done!" cried the lusty giants in a chorus, and I swooned away for joy.

* * *

LONG was I the hero of that homestead, where by-and-by another little Evangel came to look upon the uncle who had saved her life. Sweet, sweet and priceless to me are the memories of the grateful devotion of them all to me—still further wrecked and weakened by the terrors of that night. For my wounded thigh long kept me in peril of my life, and when it was healed, had so shrunk up, I could only walk with the help of crutches.

* * *

NEVERTHELESS from that night, the imbecility of my past years went away. I had learned a lesson in the mysteries of life. It were possible, I had then discovered, that even I should hold in my hand the precious balances of human fates, and with weakling but determined zeal, there were yet left to me by Providence, powers of good, of rescue from evil.

EDWARD JENKINS.

A POET OF TO-DAY.*

SOME seven years ago a metrical drama, modelled on the antique, and entitled *Philoctetes*, was published anonymously, and immediately arrested the public attention. The critics were unanimous in its praise, and justly so. There was but one writer in existence (on the supposition that it was not the first offshoot of a new poetic brain) to whom its authorship could be assigned, viz., Mr. Matthew Arnold. It was too severely classical for Mr. Swinburne, although there was fire in it which again and again summoned up his name in the mind of the reader; but no one would have been surprised had it been discovered that it was the work of the author of "Empedocles on Etna." However, such was not the case; it was found that the writer of the drama was a young aspirant in the field of literature, who had thus inaugurated his career in a manner at once striking and full of promise: Majestic, and yet passionate, with a luxuriance of imagery perfectly astonishing, the drama possessed elements which deserved to enshrine it amongst the best modern works of its kind, and to secure it a high place in our literary treasures. *Philoctetes* had been clothed by the great Sophocles in robes truly regal, his adventures and vicissitudes affording tragic scope of the finest description for the Greek poet; and it therefore required some daring on the part of a new writer in this far-off era to address himself to a task which was certain to prove either a fiasco or an avouchment of genius. Nevertheless, success justified the adventurer; and a second perusal of the volume after the lapse of years will only serve to sustain the judgment passed upon it on its first appearance. It was something noticeable, too, that the attention of the reading public—busy for the most part in the consumption of literary garbage—should have been induced to turn aside by the very power of the new singer, to listen to strains with which it had been rarely treated. The writer came not with tinsel in his hand, but nuggets of pure gold, which the public, too often blind to the best that is offered it, accepted with unaccustomed prescience. The poem not only appealed to all readers possessing scholarship and a cultivated taste, but took a far wider range by the emotional power which it displayed. Those over whom the old Greek drama exercised but little charm were impressed with the poetic fervour of the English imitation, and welcomed it as a contribution of genuine art.

* "Searching the Net: a Book of Verses." By John Leicester Warren, author of "*Philoctetes*." London: Strahan & Co. 1873.

Naturally the further appearance of one who had so successfully grappled with a magnificent subject was looked forward to with some interest, if not eagerness. Nor were the expectations so indulged disappointed. After the production of "*Orestes*," a second metrical drama, which was a work of superior order, though not able to vie with its predecessor, Mr. Warren issued his "*Rehearsals: a Book of Verse*." Concerning this it is not necessary to say much here, but one or two observations are imperatively demanded. There are poems in the volume which for picturesqueness and rich colour have rarely been excelled, whilst the artistic finish of many of the efforts reminds one forcibly of some of the most successful minor pieces of Tennyson. The author has studied compression and concentration to some purpose, as will be admitted on a perusal of the "*Hebrew Lament over Defeat*," an expostulation supposed to be delivered by the Almighty to his chosen people, and a poem entitled simply, "*An Ode*." The stanzas, too, on Joan of Arc are remarkable from another point of view. Under the guidance of the poet the reader is transplanted to the fifteenth century; and the whole scene in which the heroine appears is realized with a vividness and a clearness which are truly surprising. The manipulation of the various kinds of verse in which the volume is written is very masterly. The poems are short, and prove the author's capacity to deal with the lyrical as well as the more sustained form of his art. The only remark which might seem derogatory to Mr. Warren that we have to make upon his "*Rehearsals*" is their extreme vagueness. It is with difficulty that we apprehend their meaning in some instances; and in others where we do, we notice a lack of faith or anchorage, which is saddening occasionally, though not altogether hopeless. The singer was young, and will, doubtless, be all the better now for his probationary period of gloom. It is noteworthy, indeed, that all intensely subjective poets are, at some period of their lives, given to melancholy—we do not mean in its narrow and restricted sense of a maundering, unreasonable discontent, but in the higher and loftier sense which comes from a close contemplation of humanity as a grand and gigantic failure. The objective poet turns to Nature, and she ministers to him with loving hands: she smiles benignantly upon him, and his song bears generally the happy impress of her influence. The subjective poet considers the constitution of the individual soul; its capabilities, its aspirations, its confined limits, and its relations to the infinite; and the result is frequently to tinge all his work with sadness. But as the wings of his genius become stronger this sadness may disappear; or, at any rate, may lose all that side of it which is scarcely worthy of the deep-thinking mind. It does not always depart; sometimes it leaves remnants behind which, when fostered, as in the case of Byron, for instance (notwithstanding his splendid gifts), turn into misanthropy. There never was a poet yet, we would

venture to say, who did not feel the hollowness, the unsatisfying nature of things; but the mark of the real, the strong poet, is that he does not allow this feeling to become master of his soul, thus enervating his best energies. Sooner or later he rises to the higher dignity of being able to contemplate misery with not less sad but more understanding eyes, and by the aid of his genius he desires, and attempts, to supply its antidote. Surely the poet could have no nobler work or one that could so conclusively stamp him, when rightly understood, as the ambassador from the Divine.

Turning now to the volume upon which we are more particularly concerned to dwell, it is interesting to find that Mr. Warren's talents have been ripening in the interim since his last appearance. It was easy to predicate that this would be so, and the result is indubitable. If the world has not lost its taste for what is really admirable in style, these new poems must afford it real delight. They show the richness of the author's genius to perfection. The thoughts are fine and finely expressed. In the matter of setting, alone, the writer is one of the most perfect artificers at present living. There may be a ring occasionally here and there which indicates in what school of poets he has graduated, but, on the whole, this influence is rapidly disappearing and he is standing forth entirely on his own basis, and chanting his own music. There is nothing of the ruggedness to be met with in Browning or Walt Whitman, but neither, on the other hand, are the ease and smoothness of his verse traceable to the influence of the Laureate, who has been instrumental in the moulding of so many of our young poets. The volume opens with "The Defeat of Glory," written in stanzas of a favourite metre. Glory is represented in the guise of a king, who lies with dull orbs in his stately chamber, "in dim eclipse of human power." Then we have the following imaginative lines:—

"The couch of death is glorious where he lies;
Its silver canopies forbid the rays.
Sun, shine not on his pillow till he dies,—
Time's tyrant once, and emperor of days!

Though all his precinct glitter to its roof,
Though regal the surroundings of his end,
No palace-floors are ever phantom-proof
When shadows of a greater King ascend.

The pale hours of the dawning at his bed
Bend each in turn to pity him and pass,
Who drave his hook in nations: Now, instead,
Moans are the only edicts that he has."

The reference to the power of Death here is especially happy. The poem then proceeds in the form of an exordium to the expiring monarch, but afterwards changes in form, without, however, losing any of its power. In graphic touches is depicted the course of those

who have been "waiters" upon greatness in various ways, and who are now becoming impatient as the sceptre, which Glory hitherto held so firmly, threatens to pass from his enfeebled grasp. "Is it worth a loaf, a leaf, one feather, to be king?" is the question asked as, after the surfeit of life and all its pleasures, the hold upon earth comes to be relaxed. The poem closes with a soliloquy supposed to have been spoken by the potentate himself during the past years of his magnificence and fruition, when all seemed well and secure with him :—

- "All spirits, bond and free, are mine to use ;
 I make all seasons sweet to my desire.
 And when the hard frost lies where lay soft dews,
 In every winter-house a cedar fire
- 'Lends gracious heat : you would not guess the year
 That pushes icy shoulders at the doors
 Of poor men's huts. A land of bloom is here
 Weaving an ample summer on my floors.
- 'Against the ruddy lamp of my renown,
 As some great Pharos light in stormy heaven,
 The lesser princedoms shatter, wildly blown,
 And rend their helmless realms, as foam is riven.
- 'I am set for God, to rivet or unwind,
 To establish or remove at my decree.
 I alter and abolish, break or bind ;
 Shall any power perplex my deity ?
- 'I am for ever ; no decay makes wan
 The eternal crown that gleams against my brow.
 Death is my bondaman, Pain my wage-woman,
 Age is at league with me.' Behold thee now !"

The whole scope of this poem is lofty, and the writing is equal to the conception, but the three words of the poet at the conclusion, however emphatic, are scarcely adequate to convey to the mind of the general reader all that they are meant to embody. The author abruptly closes his vision with the brief expression given. It has been said that in treating of supernatural things the poet should always preserve an air of mystery, and yet at the same time be picturesque, definite, in the presentation of his images. Both these conditions Mr. Warren fulfils. With the glamour of the palace and the half-shadowy, half-real personification of Glory, we also get very definite accessories which give to the entire conception a positive and sufficient substantiality of interest. "The Bird of my Love," is a sweet conceit in dainty verse, which is followed by a somewhat unpleasant choice of subject entitled, "A Middle Class Tragedy." It is one of those stories which occasionally crop up in Society, but which are generally considered unsuitable themes for the poet's pen. It relates here to the betrayal of a clerk's wife by a great nobleman,

and the subsequent casting forth of the handsome toy upon the world. It is told with great force, and yet with a delicacy which one would have imagined it had been almost impossible to exhibit from the nature of the task set before the narrator. Of course, there is no reason why such subjects should not be dealt with and rendered very forcible: the danger is not in the subject but in the treatment; here it has been successfully grappled with.

Mr. Warren loves Nature, and has a happy facility in drawing from her inexhaustible resources. But a great deal of this comes from his observant eye. Many of his pages are full of allusions to the beautiful in flower, in rock, in dell, in field, and in ocean. He communes with the Great Mother because he loves her: hence his pages exhibit no barrenness of similes which shall assist to enforce his thoughts and cause them to be remembered in the minds of his readers. One of the most successful poems in the present volume will serve to show the author's acquaintanceship with natural objects, and his power to turn them to account. It is called "An Ocean Grave," and strikes us as being very beautiful, and is remarkable too for the way in which it seems to beget in us as we read it a feeling of melancholy similar to that which moved him whose lament it is supposed to be. After a description of the grave by the ocean in which his Love lies buried, the mourner proceeds with his threnody:—

"I would not change my sorrow sweet
For others' nuptial hours;
I love the daisies at thy feet
More than their orange flowers.

Let snowdrops early in the year
Droop o'er her silent breast;
And bid the later cowslip rear
The amber of its crest.

Come hither, linnet tufted-red,
Drift by, O wailing tern;
Set pure vale-lilies at her head,
At her feet lady-fern.

Grow, samphire, at the tidal brink,
Wave, pansies of the shore,
To whisper how alone I think
Of her for evermore.

Bring blue sea-hollies, thorny, keen,
Long lavender in flower;
Grey wormwood like a hoary queen,
Stanch mullein like a tower.

O sea-wall mounded long and low,
Let iron bounds be thine;
Nor let the salt wave overflow
That breast I held divine.

Though cold her pale lips to reward
With love's own mysteries,
Ah, rob no daisy from her sward,
Rough gale of eastern seas!

Ah, render sere no silken bent
That by her head-stone waves;
Let noon and golden summer blent
Pervade these ocean graves.

And, ah, dear heart, in thy still nest,
Resign this earth of woes,
Forget the ardours of the west,
Neglect the morning glows.

Sleep and forget all things but one,
Heard in each wave of sea,—
How lonely all the years will run
Until I rest by thee."

We think it will be admitted that there is a very keen sympathy in these verses between the writer and the subject and circumstances which he endeavours to depict. There is that faculty in full manifestation which gives the poet pre-eminence over other men—the faculty of seeing into the depths of things and of interpreting the secretest thoughts of nature and the human soul. In the very next poem to that from which we have just quoted, there is further evidence afforded towards the establishment of our point. The lines on Ophelia are significant for their tenderness and their beauty. There is an excellent fitness, too, or adaptation of the metre to the subject, which helps the general effect. Mr. Warren naturally turns to subjects which have pathos in them. By far the majority of his poems deal with no vulgar happiness—sometimes they speak of a profound joy, but nearly all have a bearing upon the sorrows of human life. It is the peculiarity of his genius. It clings to what is sad, yet draws thence many thoughts of beauty, and, when rightly understood, also of hopefulness. The sad poet need not be misanthropical. The latter quality belongs to those men who suffer simply from intellectual or moral bile. It is not that they feel for the world's sorrow, or have a keen appreciation of its unsatisfied cravings, but rather that they are discontented with everything without having an intelligible reason for it. There were many of these who professed to be profoundly affected by Byron; they imitated his sorrows and his wailings, and even his personal appearance. They rushed into long collars and left their hair to grow long and dishevelled, imagining that they had thereby attained to two of the qualifications of the poet. A quantity of verse was thrown forth upon society which by no means pointed to deep mental suffering, but rather to indigestion. It was as if a heavy nightmare had afflicted the poets, and their verses, instead of eliciting sympathy for their supposed melancholy, only produced a feeling of

profound contempt. Now wherever, on the contrary, the poet and his works are tinged with a real sadness, the world is sure to be the better for the song, and it will welcome it even in spite of its sombreness. We do not always want to be laughing, if we do not always wish to weep. But the saddest genius of our own time is not only the most powerful but gives also the most pleasure and the most profit. Do not let it be imagined, then, that we would turn away from what comes to us in the most serious and pathetic form. We welcome these latest effusions of Mr. Warren, and, in attempting to gauge their spirit, are rather attracted than repelled by their tearful burden. The poem "Separated Fortunes" (to pursue our notice of the volume) traverses much of the ground of "Locksley Hall," though it is restricted in length, and there are some new ideas which pertain to the later poet alone. The sweet, sensitive spirit of a loving woman has been united with the lot of one who is gross and has no understanding of the treasure he possesses. The old lover has to lament; seas divide him from his love, and he tells her that the separation must be endured till the end. The years will rust themselves away, and then upon her "spirit weary for the night sleep shall unroll the prison-doors of day." The story, it will be perceived, is by no means a new one, though a new grace is given to it by its treatment.

We now come to another class of effort on the part of the author, viz., two or three poems of a somewhat larger scope, and written in blank verse. "The Cardinal's Lament" is a soliloquy supposed to be spoken on Easter Day, 1872, at Rome; and we can only express our astonishment that it should have been found necessary to state in a footnote that the sentiments given utterance to are not those of Mr. Warren but of the Cardinal. Yet some critics, it appears, have assumed that the opinions in this monologue were those of the author. Many of the lines are exceedingly forcible. Take this for instance, as part of the lament of the Cardinal:—

"Ah, spare us many Easters like this last;
 For now the ungodly chide at us, and say,
 We have no Christ this Easter to arise,
 We watch corruption by some common grave,
 Our Christ is in the ground, he will not hear;
 We are dreamers, how in some old fabled tale
 A good man died unjustly, lay in earth,
 How soldiers sealed the cavern of his rest;
 How lovely dawned that Easter, when of old
 The Galilean women came to weep,
 Loving the gentle prophet that was gone.
 So far the tale is credible: but now
 We hear of certain angels, when indeed
 Philosophy has settled there were none.
 We hear of how the cold dead Christ arose—
 But one wise Frenchman wrote a pretty book,
 And proved that dead men always fell to dust."

And so on. The entire poem is a fine piece of sarcasm mingled with a vivid representation of the feeling of regret. The Cardinal attempts to grapple with the intellectual and spiritual doubt of the age, but all the substance of his arguments lies in the assertion that there cannot be "a reasonable Faith." Thus, the old superstition which has been in vogue for so many centuries is once more called into requisition. But the intellect of the ancient dogmatic church (the Church of Rome) is conscious that it is being left behind; its nature is not so devout as that of many of the honest doubters of the time. When asked for reasons it raves, dogma supplants understanding, blind bigotry usurps the position of sincere faith, and when the old form of Roman Catholicism, or Ultramontaniam as it is now called, is asked for the intelligible supports on which it is based, the only answer it can give is in the childish words of the Cardinal introduced to us by Mr. Warren—which views are already beginning to fail to satisfy the really thinking Roman Catholic mind :—

"Ye turn

And answer, 'Show us God and it's enough.'
Lo, Peter's chair, and God in flesh thereon!"

"Medea : a Tragedy of Jealousy" strikes us as being less happy than the Lament, but there are many vigorous passages to be found in it, and the central idea, the great passion of Medea, is well delineated. The story is simple, and of course is well known to all students of classic literature. Medea upbraids Jason, the king, for his infidelity in preferring the captive Corinthian girl to herself. All the forms in which feminine jealousy depicts itself are well preserved, and the attractions of the favourite are furiously discounted by the enraged queen. She is not meet to be a hero's wife, says the real spouse; she cannot come near it: slave or concubine she may be, but no wife. And then she breaks out into this piece of genuine pathos in an impassioned address to her husband :—

"Though I lose

Thy presence day by day, and evermore
Thou makest any pretext to begone—
Still let me nurse once more my child to rest,
As in old days beside thee; one swift hour
Endure me; make pretence that all is well,
Lest the child suffer; sit with me a little
Just now and then. I am old, I know, and faded,
I never had much youth! Our years have been
So stormy; husband, how you loved me then!
How sweet it was to tread the brinks of death,
One will between us. O we went so firmly:
I felt thy hand upon my hand, and fear
Became a laughter. Through the smoke of death,
The dragon land, the fiery deeps of blood,
I saw one face—my husband's—and went on,
As though I felt the daisies at my feet

In meadow places under quiet woods.
 It is my glory to have been thy mate,
 Not idle, but another living brain
 Building thy throne beside thee, night and day :
 In rumours of conspiracy, in hours
 Of chidden armies, still at thy right hand
 Undaunted ; when rebellion, bolt by bolt,
 Played round our royal heads to tear us down ;
 Did I quail then ? did I seem pitiful ?
 Not so : men said, This woman is all steel ;
 But they were wrong, I was all love ; no more."

Mr. Warren has succeeded in giving a sublime touch to the wrongs of the ancient queen. He might, perhaps, have made of his subject a more elaborate dramatic poem than he has done. In fact, the basis he has laid shows that he had sufficient power over the tragic story to have constructed a more pretentious drama. This poem, in conjunction with one or two others in the volume which could be cited, afford ample justification for the poet in dealing with lofty subjects in a dramatic form. His minor poems are excellent, but they do not do him full justice in showing to what heights his art may carry him. He has given ample evidence that he is capable of more sustained effort than he has delighted us with in his last work ; and it is to be hoped that he will not deprive us of that which he is well able to perform. His genius is strong enough to deal with such subjects as "Philoctetes" with even greater facility and richness than he exhibited in that excellent work. His power of thinking is not weakened, or exhausted, as is too often the case with young poets ; on the contrary, his thought is stronger, and has more body in it. He is not one of those who launch upon the literary career with a few ideas, and whose poetic stock-in-trade is soon exhausted. There is the fruitfulness of genius in him ; that power of reproduction which we behold in the world in so many ways—the originaive power. We perceive no signs whatever as yet that his vein is worked out, and after a man has produced three or four volumes of poems, all of a different character, and yet all thoroughly original and pregnant with thought, there is every room for confidence that he is intended to leave his mark upon the age.

The last of the poems, in blank verse, with any pretensions, to which we are desirous of calling attention, is one entitled "Jael." It deals with the powerfully dramatic story of Holy Writ, and as a composition ranks in merit with any of the pieces in the volume. After the hymn of victory is done, and Jael is alone, she ruminates as to the real effect of the great historic deed she has perpetrated. She has read in the looks of those whom she has met the supreme disdain which they entertain for her, and she renders their silent but eloquent scorn into this :—

" ' Better to be as we are, earth and dust,
 Than to endure, as Jael shall live on,

In self-contempt more bitter than the grave.
 Live on and pine in long remorseful years.
 Terrible tears are sequel to this deed;
 Beat on thy breast, have ashes in thy hair,
 Still shalt thou bear about in all thy dreams
 One image, one reproach, one face, one fear,
 Live, Jael, live. We shall be well revenged.'

* * * * *
 Can time efface a deed so wholly vile?
 She stood, the mother-snake, before her tent,
 She feigned a piteous dew in her false eyes.
 She made her low voice gentle as a bird's.
 Her one hand beckoned to the fugitive,
 Her other felt along the poniard's edge
 Hid near the breast where late her baby fed.
 She drew the noble weary captain in;
 Her guest beneath the shelter of her home,
 He laid him down to rest and had no fear.
 The sacred old alliance with her clan,
 The trustful calm immunity of sleep,
 Sealing security each more secure.
 Ah, surely, he was safe if anywhere
 Beneath the mantle which she laid on him.
 He was too noble to mistrust her much;
 His fading sense felt her insidious arm
 Folding him warmly. Then he slept—she rose,
 Slid like a snake across the tent—struck twice—
 And stung him dead."

This extract is a fair representation of Mr. Warren's blank verse, which will be perceived to be beyond the generality. He is complete master of the measure, and can wield it to advantage. In addition to this, it is a good medium for the exhibition of his talent, which is capable of translating its thoughts into a massive form. He has a considerable dramatic as well as descriptive faculty, and blank verse is well adapted to poetry of his order. The smallest of his poems bears witness to this possession of the dramatic element. We should like to have quoted from his "Two Old Kings: a Sketch after Kaulbach," which not only further attests the point just referred to but exhibits real pathos. Two ancient kings and comrades hold high wassail in a castle on the Rhine, and as the midnight hours draw on one recounts the story of their lives. Bitterness and disappointment have been written on their earlier years: now they endeavour to cheer each other, and as the morning breaks in the East the fine old warriors drink to their next meeting, the next banquet, however, being held in Heaven. One more quotation we must make, and it shall be from the "Ode to the Sun."

"Thou sayest—I have no lot or hand in slumber;
 I am Light, supreme.
 My robes of glory quench the planet number,
 As Day pales Dream.

In grass-land shall arise a sound of heifers,
 A voice of herds ;
 I bathe my glowing hands in breathing zephyrs,
 I call the birds.

In ripple and perfume and deep breezy lustre
 My flame feet tread ;
 My girdle sprinkles moons in many a cluster,
 As sand is shed.

I am the gates of life. My dawn is burning
 With foam of stars,
 Bright as the margin of a wave returning
 In refluxing bars.

The planets veil their burning faces near me ;
 The green world's ends
 Flash up through miles of ether that uprear me ;
 Pale vapour blends

In underneath, unfolds itself or closes,
 Divides, dilates ;
 The Sea, my pathway, spreads her deep with roses
 To my red gates."

We hold that the poet who can write like this need not despair. The only danger to which he is exposed is too great a devotion to the picturesque, as in the above lines, which if pursued to excess may lead to a diminution of strength. Colour is an excellent thing, but if an artist or a poet lays himself out specially to create great effects by its aid, the chances are that his form and depth will be to some extent impaired. Do not let it be understood, however, that any such result is perceptible in the present volume. It is not only rich in colour but possesses great breadth and vigour. We would impress upon Mr. Warren that after these several successful essays in verse, he might fairly take a bolder flight and produce a still greater and more ambitious work. Not only do we now congratulate him on his latest production because of its intrinsic value, but because it is one of those volumes which must materially assist in elevating the whole tone of current poetry. It has fine conception, high finish, and appeals to what is best and purest both as regards the intellect and the spirit.

GEORGE BARNETT SMITH.

THE WEATHER AND THE SUN.

THERE are few scientific questions of greater interest than the inquiry whether it is possible to find a means of predicting the weather for a long time in advance. In former ages many attempts were made to solve this problem by a reference to the motions of the heavenly bodies. Other methods of prediction were, indeed, in vogue ; but I am not here considering ordinary weather portents, or mere scientific schemes for anticipating the weather of two or three coming days : and with a few trifling exceptions, depending on observations of plants and animals, it is the case that the only wide rules for predicting weather were based on the motions of the sun and moon, the planets and the stars. It must be remembered that even astronomers of repute placed faith, until quite recent years, in the seemingly absurd tenets of judicial astrology. We cannot greatly wonder, therefore, if the more reasonable thesis that the heavenly bodies determine weather changes, was regarded with favour. Accordingly we find Horrocks, more than two centuries ago, drawing the distinction here indicated, where he says that in anticipating "storm and tempest" from a conjunction of Mercury with the Sun, he coincides "with the opinion of the astrologers, but in other respects despises their more puerile vanities." We find Bacon in like manner remarking that "all the planets have their summer and winter, wherein they dart their rays stronger or weaker, according to their perpendicular or oblique direction." He says, however, that "the commixtures of the rays of the fixed stars with one another are of use in contemplating the fabric of the world and the nature of the subjacent regions, but in no respect for predictions." Bacon remarks again that reasonable astrology (*Astrologia sana*) "should take into account the apogees and perigees of the planets, with a proper inquiry into what the vigour of planets may perform of itself ; for a planet is more brisk in its apogee, but more communicative in its perigee : it should include, also, all the other accidents of the planets' motions, their accelerations, retardations, courses, stations, retrogradations, distances from the sun, increase and diminution of light, eclipses, &c. ; for all these things affect the rays of the planets, and cause them to act either weaker or stronger, or in a different manner."

It is a remarkable circumstance that systems of weather prediction based on such considerations were not quickly exploded owing to their failure when tested by experience. Yet singularly enough it has scarcely ever happened that any wide system of interpretation

has been devised, which has not been regarded with favour by its inventor long after it had been in reality disproved by repeated instances of failure. This remark applies to recent systems as well as to those invented in earlier times. Within the last twenty years, for example, methods of prediction based on the moon's movements, on the conjunctions of the planets, and on other relations, have been maintained with astonishing perseverance and constancy, in the face of what outsiders cannot but regard as a most discouraging want of agreement between the predicted weather and the actual progress of events. Here, as in so many cases of prediction, we find the justice of Bacon's aphorism, "Men mark when they hit, and never mark when they miss."

It is noteworthy, indeed, that the very circumstance which appears to present a fatal objection to all schemes of prediction based on the motions of the celestial bodies, supplies the means of imagining that predictions have been fulfilled. The objection I refer to is this,—we know that the weather is seldom alike over very wide regions, while nevertheless the celestial bodies present the same aspect towards the whole extent of such regions, or an aspect so nearly the same as to suggest that the same conditions of weather should prevail if the weather really depended on the position of the heavenly bodies. It appears, then, that the inventor of a really trustworthy system must have a distinct scheme for each part of every continent,—nay, of every country, if not of every county. This objection is not taken into account, however, by the inventors of systems, while the fact on which it depends affords the means of showing that each prediction has been fulfilled. Thus, suppose "bad weather and much wind" have been predicted on a certain day, and that day is particularly fine and calm in London. If this were urged as an objection to the soundness of the system, the answer would run somewhat on this wise—"Unquestionably it was fine in London, but in North Scotland (or in France, or Spain, or Italy, as the case may be) there was very gloomy weather, and in Ireland (suppose) quite strong winds are reported to have prevailed in the afternoon." The readiness with which men satisfy themselves in such cases, corresponds with that mischievous ingenuity wherewith foolish persons satisfy themselves that a fortune-teller had foretold the truth, that a dream had been fulfilled, a superstition justified, and so forth.

The tendency, at present, amongst those who are desirous of forming a scheme of weather prediction, is to seek the origin of our weather-changes in changes of the sun's condition, and by determining the laws of the solar changes to ascertain the laws which regulate changes in the weather.

It may be remarked, in passing, that this new phase of the inquiry does not reject planetary influences altogether. The theory is entertained by many well-known students of science that changes in the

condition of the sun are dependent on the varying positions of the planets ; so that if it should be established that our weather-changes are connected with solar changes, we should infer that indirectly the planets in their motions rule the weather on our earth.

I propose now to consider the evidence relating to the sun's influence, and to discuss the question (altogether distinct, be it remarked) whether a means of accurate weather prediction may be obtained if the sun's influence be regarded as demonstrated.

There is one strong point in favour of the new theory, in the fact that the sun is unquestionably the prime cause of all weather changes. To quote the words of Lieut.-Colonel Strange, an enthusiastic advocate of the theory (and eager to have it tested at this country's charge), "there can hardly be a doubt that almost every natural phenomenon connected with climate can be distinctly traced to the sun as the great dominating force, and it is a natural inference" (though not, as he says, an unavoidable one) "that the changes, and what we now call the uncertainties of climate are connected with the constant fluctuations which we know to be perpetually occurring in the sun itself." I may proceed, indeed, in this place, to quote the following words in which Colonel Strange enunciates the theory itself which I am about to discuss, and its consequences:—"The bearing of climatic changes on a vast array of problems connected with navigation, agriculture, and health, need but be mentioned to show the importance of seeking in the sun, where they doubtless reside, for the causes which govern these changes. It is indeed my conviction that of all the fields now open for scientific cultivation, there is not one which, quite apart from its transcendent philosophical interest, promises results of such high utilitarian value, as the exhaustive systematic study of the sun."

It cannot be doubted, I think, that if anything like what is here promised could be hoped for from the study of the sun, it would be a matter of more than national importance to undertake the task indicated by Colonel Strange. The expense of new observatories for this special subject of study would in that case be very fully repaid. It would be worth while to employ the most skilful astronomers at salaries comparable with those which are paid to our Government ministers ; it would be well to secure on corresponding terms the advice of those most competent to decide on the instrumental requirements of the case ; and in fact the value of the work which is at present accomplished at Greenwich, great though that value is, would sink into utter insignificance, in my judgment, compared with the results flowing in the supposed case from the proposed "exhaustive and systematic study" of the great central luminary of the planetary system.

The subject we are to discuss is manifestly therefore of the utmost importance, and cannot be too carefully dealt with. It

would be a misfortune on the one hand to be led by careless reasoning to underestimate the chances in favour of the proposed scheme, while on the other it would be most mischievous to entertain unfounded expectations where the necessary experiments must be of a costly nature, and where science would be grievously discredited should it be proved that the whole scheme was illusory.

We note, first, that besides being "the great dominating force" to which all natural phenomena connected with climate are due, the sun has special influence on all the most noteworthy *variations* of weather. The seasons are due to solar influence; and here we have an instance of a power of prediction derived from solar study, though belonging to a date so remote that we are apt to forget the fact. It seems so obvious that summer will be on the whole warmer than winter, that we overlook the circumstance that at some epoch or other this fact, at least in its relation to the apparent motions of the sun, must have been recognised as a discovery. Men must at one time have learned, or perhaps we should rather say, each race of men must at one time have noticed, that the varying warmth on which the processes of vegetation depend, correspond with the varying diurnal course of the sun. So soon as this was noticed, and so soon as the periodic nature of the sun's varying motions had been ascertained, men had acquired in effect the power of predicting that at particular times or seasons, the weather on the whole would be warmer than at other seasons. In other words, so soon as men had recognised the period we call the *year*, they could predict that one half of each year would be warmer than the other half. Simple as this fact may seem, it is important to notice it as the beginning of weather prediction; for as will presently appear, it has an important bearing on the more complex questions at present involved in the prognostication of weather-changes.

It became manifest almost as soon as this discovery had been made, that the weather of particular days or even of weeks and longer periods could not, by its means, be predicted. A week in summer may be cold, and a week in winter may be warm; nor, so far as is even yet known, is there a single part of any year the temperature of which can be certainly depended upon, at least within the temperate zone. In certain tropical regions there are tolerably constant weather variations; but so far is this from being the case in the temperate zones of either hemisphere, that it is impossible to affirm certainly, even that during a week or fortnight at any given summer season there will be one hot day, or that during a corresponding period in winter there will be one day of cold weather.

It became manifest also, at an early epoch, that terrestrial conditions must be intimately involved in all questions of weather, since the year in different countries in the same latitudes presents different features. Such differences are of two kinds,—those which have a ten-

dency to be constant, and those which are in their nature variable. For example, the annual weather in Canadian regions having the same range of latitude as Great Britain, differs always to a very marked degree, though not always to the same degree, from that which prevails in this country : here then we have a case of a constant difference due unquestionably to terrestrial relations. Again, when we have a hot or dry summer in this country, warm or damp weather may prevail in other countries in the same latitudes, and *vice versa* ; differences of this kind are ordinarily * variable, and in the present position of weather-science are regarded as accidental.

Hitherto, weather-science has depended solely on the study of these terrestrial effects as they vary under varying conditions. Modern meteorological research is confined to the record and study of the actual condition of the weather from day to day at selected stations in different countries. It cannot be denied that the inquiry has not been attended with success. At vast expense millions of records of heat, rainfall, winds, clouds, barometric pressure, and so on have been secured ; but hitherto no law has been recognised in the variations thus recorded,—no law at least from which any constant system of prediction for long periods in advance can be deduced.

On this point I shall quote first a remarkable saying of Sir W. Herschel's, which appears to me, like many such sayings of his, to be only too applicable to the present state of science. In endeavouring to interpret the laws of weather, "we are in the position," Herschel remarks, "of a man who hears at intervals a few fragments of a long history related in a prosy, unmethodical manner. A host of circumstances omitted or forgotten, and the want of connection between the parts, prevents the hearer from obtaining possession of the entire history. Were he allowed to interrupt the narrator, and ask him to explain the apparent contradictions, or to clear up doubts at obscure points, he might hope to arrive at a general view. The questions that we would address to nature, are the very experiments of which we are deprived in the science of meteorology."

The late Professor De Morgan, indeed, selected meteorology as the

* I use this qualifying word, because some differences of the kind are more or less regular. Thus, when there is a dry summer in certain regions in the West of Europe, there is commonly a wet summer in easterly regions in the same latitude, and *vice versa*, the difference simply depending on the height at which the clouds travel which are brought by the south-westerly counter-trade winds. When these clouds travel high, they do not give up their moisture until they have travelled far inland or towards the east ; when they travel low, their moisture is condensed so soon as they reach the western landslopes. It is not uncommonly the case again, that when we in England have dry summers, much rain falls on the Atlantic, and our drought is simply due to the fall of this rain before the clouds from the south-west have reached us. More commonly, however, drought in England is due to the delay of the downfall, in consequence of the clouds from the south-west travelling at a greater height than usual.

subject on which, above all others, systematic observations had been most completely wasted,—as a special instance of the failure of the true Baconian method (which be it noticed is not, as is so commonly supposed, the modern scientific method). “There is an attempt at induction going on,” says De Morgan, “which has yielded little or no fruit, the observations made in the meteorological observatories. This attempt is carried on in a manner which would have caused Bacon to dance for joy” (query); “for he lived in times when Chancellors did dance. Russia, says M. Biot, is covered by an army of meteorographs, with generals, high officers, subalterns, and privates, with fixed and defined duties of observation. Other countries, also, have their systematic observations. And what has come of it? Nothing, says M. Biot, and nothing will ever come of it: the veteran mathematician and experimental philosopher declares, as does Mr. Ellis” (Bacon’s biographer), “that no single branch of science has ever been fruitfully explored in this way.” A special interest attaches, I may remark, to the opinion of M. Biot, because it was given upon the proposal of the French government to construct meteorological observatories in Algeria.

It is well known that our Astronomer Royal holds a similar opinion. De Morgan thus quaintly indicates his interpretation of one particular expression of Sir G. Airy’s opinion:—“In the report to the Greenwich Board of Visitors, for 1867, the Astronomer Royal, speaking of the increase of meteorological observatories, remarks, ‘Whether the effect of this movement will be that millions of useless observations will be added to the millions that already exist, or whether something may be expected to result which will lead to a meteorological theory, I cannot hazard a conjecture!’ This is a conjecture, and a very obvious one; if Mr. Airy would have given $2\frac{1}{2}d.$, for the chance of a meteorological theory formed by masses of observations, he would never have said what I have quoted.”

The simple combination of terrestrial considerations with the effects due to the sun’s varying daily path having thus far failed to afford any interpretation of the varying weather from year to year, it is natural to inquire whether the variations in the sun’s condition from year to year may not supply the required means of interpreting and hence of predicting weather-changes. We know that the sun’s condition does vary, because we sometimes see many large spots upon his surface, whereas at others he has no spots, or few and small ones. We can scarcely doubt that these variations affect the supply of heat and light, as well as of chemical action and possibly of other forms of force; and hence we are certainly dealing with a *vera causa*, though whether this real cause be an efficient cause of weather-changes remains yet to be determined.

It may perhaps be as well to inquire, however, in the first place, whether any peculiarities of weather can be traced to another cir-

cumstance which ought to be at least as efficient, one would suppose, as any changes in the sun's action due to the spots. I refer to his varying distance from the earth. It is known doubtless to all my readers that in June and July, although these are our summer months, the sun is farther away than in December,—and this, not by an inconsiderable distance, but by more than three millions of miles. Accordingly, on a summer day in our hemisphere we receive much less heat than is received on a summer day in the southern hemisphere. Or instead of comparing our summer heat with summer heat in the southern hemisphere, we may make comparison between the quantity of heat received by the whole earth on a day in June and on a day in December. Either way of viewing the matter is instructive; and I believe many of my readers will be surprised when they hear what is the actual amount of difference.

We receive in fact, on June 30th, less heat and light than dwellers at our antipodes receive on December 30th, by the amount which would be lost if an opaque disc having a diameter equal to one-fourth of the sun's,* came upon the sun's face as seen on December 30 at our antipodes. It need hardly be said that no spots whose effects would be comparable with those produced by such a disc of blackness have ever been seen upon the face of the sun. Spots are not black or nearly black, even in their very nucleus. The largest ever seen has not had an extent approaching that of our imagined black disc, even when the whole dimensions of the spot,—nucleus, umbra, and penumbra,—have been taken into account. Moreover, all round a spot there is always a region of increased brightness, making up to a great degree, if not altogether, for the darkness of the spot itself. So that unquestionably the summer heat in the southern hemisphere exceeds the summer heat in our hemisphere to a much more marked degree than the heat given out by the sun when he is without spots exceeds the heat of a spotted sun.

It is, however, rather difficult to ascertain what effect is to be ascribed to this peculiarity. It is certain that the Australian summer differs in several important respects from the European summer; but it is not easy to say how much of the difference is due to the peculiarity we have been considering, and how much to the characteristic distinction between the northern and southern halves of the earth,—the great excess of water surface over land surface in the southern hemisphere. It is worthy of notice,

* It is easily shown that such would be the size of the imagined black disc. For the sun's distance varies from about 93 millions of miles to about 90 millions, or in the proportion of 31 to 30. Hence the size of his disc varies in the proportion of 31 times 31 to 30 times 30, or as 961 to 900. The defect of the latter number 900 amounts to 61, which is about a sixteenth part of the larger number. But a black disc having a diameter equal to a quarter of the sun's would cut off precisely a sixteenth part of his light and heat, which was the fact to be proved.

however, that even in this case, where we cannot doubt that a great difference must exist in the solar action at particular seasons, we find ourselves quite unable to recognise any peculiarities of weather as *certainly* due to this difference.

I have spoken of a second way of viewing the difference in question, by considering it as it affects the whole earth. The result is sufficiently surprising. It has been shown by the researches of Sir J. Herschel and Pouillet, that on the average our earth receives each day a supply of heat competent to heat an ocean 260 yards deep over the whole surface of the earth from the temperature of melting ice to the boiling point. Now, on or about June 30, the supply is one thirtieth greater, while on or about December 30, the supply is one thirtieth less. Accordingly, on June 30, the heat received in a single day would be competent only to raise an ocean 251½ yards deep from the freezing to the boiling point, whereas on December 30 the heat received from the sun would so heat an ocean 268½ yards deep. The mere excess of heat, therefore, on December 30, as compared with June 30, would suffice to raise an ocean more than 17 yards deep and covering the whole earth, from the freezing point to the temperature of boiling water! It will not be regarded as surprising if terrestrial effects of some importance should follow from so noteworthy an excess, not merely of light and heat, but of gravitating force, of magnetic influence, and of actinic or chemical action, exerted upon the earth as a whole. Accordingly we find that there is a recognisable increase in the activity of the earth's magnetism in December and January as compared with June and July. But assuredly the effect produced is not of such a character as to suggest that we should find the means of predicting weather if it were possible for us *now* to discover any solar law of change resulting in a corresponding variation of solar action upon the earth.

This leads us to consider the first great law of solar change as distinguished from systematic variations like the sun's varying change of distance and his varying daily path on the heavens. This law is that which regulates the increase and decrease of the solar spots within a period of about eleven years. The sun's condition does not, indeed, admit of being certainly predicted by this law, since it not unfrequently happens that the sun shows few spots for several weeks together, in the very height of the time of spot-frequency, while on the other hand it often happens that many and large spots are seen at other times. Nevertheless, this general law holds, that, on the whole, and taking one month with another, there is a variation in spot-frequency, having for its period an interval of rather more than eleven years.

Now, the difference between a year of maximum spot-frequency, and one of minimum frequency, is very noteworthy, notwithstanding the exceptional features just mentioned, which show themselves but

for short periods. This will be manifest on the consideration of a few typical instances. Thus, in the year 1837, the sun was observed on 168 days, during which he was not once seen without spots, while no less than 333 new groups made their appearance. This was a year of maximum spot-frequency. In 1843, the sun was observed on 312 days, and on no less than 149 of these no spots could be seen, while only 34 new groups made their appearance. This was a year of minimum spot-frequency. Passing to the next maximum year, we find that in 1848 the sun was observed on 278 days, during which he was never seen without spots, while 330 new spots made their appearance. In 1855 and 1856 together, he was observed on 634 days, on 239 of which he was without spots, while only 62 new groups made their appearance. The next maximum was not so marked as usual, that is, there was not so definite a summit, if one may so speak, to the wave of increase; but the excess of spot-frequency was none the less decided. Thus, in the four years, 1858, '59, '60, '61, the sun was observed on 335, 343, 333, and 322 days, *on not one of which he was spotless*, while the numbers of new groups for these four years were, respectively, 202, 205, 211, and 204. The minimum in 1867 was very marked, as 195 days out of 312 were without spots, and only 25 new groups appeared. The increase after 1867 was unusually rapid, since in 1869 there were no spotless days, and 224 new groups were seen, though the sun was only observed on 196 days. The number of spots in 1870, 1871, and 1872, as well as their magnitude and duration, have been above what is usual, even at the period of maximum spot-frequency.

From all this it will be manifest that we have a well-marked peculiarity to deal with, though not one of perfect uniformity. Next to the systematic changes already considered, this alternate waxing and waning of spot-frequency might be expected to be efficient in producing recognisable weather changes. Assuredly, if this should not appear to be the case, we should have to dismiss all idea that the sun-spots are weather-rulers.

Now, from the first discovery of spots, it was recognised that they must, in all probability, affect our weather to some degree. It was noticed, indeed, that our auroras seemed to be in some way influenced by the condition of the sun's surface, since they were observed to be more numerous when there are many spots than when there are few or none. Singularly enough, the effect of the spots on temperature was not only inquired into much later (for we owe to Cassini and Mairan the observation relating to auroras), but was expected to be of an opposite character from that which is in reality produced. Sir W. Herschel formed the opinion that when there are most spots the sun gives out most heat, notwithstanding the diminution of light where the spots are. He sought for evidence on this point in the price of corn in England, and it actually appeared, though by a mere

coincidence, that corn had been cheapest in years of spot-frequency, a result regarded by Herschel as implying that the weather had been warmer on the whole in those years. It was well pointed out, however, by Arago, that "in these matters we must be careful how we generalise facts before we have a very considerable number of observations at our disposal." The peculiarities of weather in a single and not extensive country like England, are quite insufficient to supply an answer to the wide question dealt with by Herschel. The weather statistics of many countries must be considered and compared. Moreover, very long periods of time must be dealt with.*

M. Gautier, of Geneva, and later MM. Arago and Barratt made a series of researches into the tabulated temperature at several stations, and for many successive years. They arrived at the conclusion that, on the whole, the weather is coolest in years of spot-frequency.

But recently the matter has been more closely scrutinised, and it has been found that the effects due to the great solar spot period, although recognisable, are by no means so obvious as had been anticipated.

These effects may be divided into three classes,—those affecting (1) temperature, (2) rainfall, and (3) terrestrial magnetism.

As respects the first, it has been discovered that when *underground* temperatures are examined, so that local and temporary causes of change are eliminated, there is a recognisable diminution of temperature in years when spots are most frequent. We owe this discovery to Professor C. P. Smyth, Astronomer Royal for Scotland. The effect is very slight; indeed, barely recognisable. I have before me, as I write, Professor Smyth's chart of the quarterly temperatures from 1837 to 1869, at depths of 3, 6, 12, and 24 French feet. Of course, the most remarkable feature even at the depth of 24 feet, is the alternate rise and fall with the seasons. But it is seen that while the range of rise and fall remains very nearly constant, the crests and troughs of the waves lie at varying levels.

* When Herschel made his researches into this subject, the law of spot-frequency had not been discovered. He would probably have found in this law, as some have since done, the explanation of the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine typified by the fat kine and lean kine of Joseph's dream. For if there were a period of eleven years in which corn and other produce of the ground waxed and waned in productiveness, it would be not at all unlikely that whenever this waxing and waning chanced to be unusually marked, there would result two series of poor and rich years apparently ranging over fourteen instead of eleven years. We have seen, above, that the waves of spot-waxing and spot-waning are not all alike in shape and extent. Whenever then a wave more marked than usual came, we should expect to find it borrowing, so to speak, both in trough and crest, from the waves on either side. It would require but a year or so either way to make the wave range over fourteen years; and observed facts even during the last half-century only, show this to be no unlikely event.

After long and careful scrutiny, I find myself compelled to admit that I cannot find the slightest evidence in *this* chart of a connection between underground temperatures and the eleven years period of sun spots. I turn, therefore, to the chart in which the annual means are given; and noting in the means at the lesser depths "confusion worse confounded" (this, of course, is no fault of Professor Smyth's, who here merely records what had actually taken place), I take the temperatures at a depth of 24 French feet. Now, neglecting minor features, I find the waves of temperature thus arranged. They go down to a little more than $46\frac{1}{2}$ degrees of the common thermometer in 1839-40; rise to about $47\frac{1}{2}$ degrees in 1847; sink to $47\frac{1}{2}$ degrees in 1849; mount nearly to $47\frac{1}{2}$ degrees again in 1852-53; are at 47 degrees in 1856-57; are nearly at 48 degrees in 1858-59; then they touch 47 degrees three times (with short periods of rising between), in 1860, 1864, and 1867; and rise above $47\frac{1}{2}$ degrees in 1869. Now if we remember that there were maxima of spots in 1837, 1848, 1859-60, and 1870, while there were minima in 1843, and 1855-56, I think it will be found to require a somewhat lively imagination to recognise a very striking association between the underground temperature and the sun's condition with respect to spots. If many spots imply diminution of heat, how does it come that the temperature rises to a maximum in 1859, and again in 1869? if the reverse, how is it that there is a minimum in 1860? I turn, lastly, to the chart in which the sun-spot waves, and the temperature waves are brought into actual comparison, and I find myself utterly unable to recognise the slightest association between them. Nevertheless, I would not urge this with the desire of in any way throwing doubt upon the opinion to which Professor Smyth has been led, knowing well that the long and careful examination he has given to this subject in all its details, may have afforded ample though not obvious evidence for the conclusions at which he has arrived. I note also, that, as he points out, Mr. Stone, director of the Cape Town Observatory, and Mr. Cleveland Abbe, director of the Cincinnati Observatory, have since, "but it is believed quite independently, published similar deductions touching the earth's temperature in reference to sun-spots." All I would remark is, that the effect is very slight and very far from being obvious at a first inspection.

Next as to rainfall and wind.

Here, again, we have results which can hardly be regarded as striking, except in the forcible evidence they convey of the insignificance of the effects which are to be imputed to the great eleven-year spot period. We owe to Mr. Baxendell, of Manchester, the most complete series of investigations into this subject. He finds that at Oxford, during the years when sun-spots were most numerous, the amount of rainfall under west and south-west winds was greater than the amount under south and south-east winds while the reverse was

the case in years when spots were few and small. Applying corresponding processes to the meteorological records for St. Petersburg, he finds that a contrary state of things prevailed there. Next we have the evidence of the Rev. R. Main, director of the Radcliffe Observatory at Oxford, who finds that westerly winds are slightly more common when sun-spots are numerous than at other times. And lastly, Mr. Meldrum, of Mauritius, notes that years of spot-frequency are characterized on the whole by a greater number of storms and hurricanes, than years when the sun shows few spots.

The association between the sun-spot period and terrestrial magnetism is of a far more marked character, though I must premise that the Astronomer Royal, after careful analysis of the Greenwich magnetic records, denies the existence of any such association whatever. There is, however, a balance of evidence in its favour. It seems very nearly demonstrated that the daily sway of the magnetic needle is greatest when sun-spots are numerous, that magnetic storms are somewhat more numerous at such times, and that auroras also are more commonly seen. Now it has been almost demonstrated by M. Marié Davy, chief of the meteorological division in the Paris Observatory, that the weather is affected in a general way by magnetic disturbances. So that we are confirmed in the opinion that indirectly, if not directly, the weather is affected to some slight degree by the great sun-spot period.

Still I must point out that not one of these cases of agreement has anything like the evidence in its favour which had been found for an association between the varying distance of Jupiter and the sun-spot changes. For eight consecutive maxima and minima this association has been strongly marked, and might be viewed as demonstrated,—only it chanced unfortunately that for two other cases the relation is *precisely reversed*; and in point of fact, whereas the period now assigned to the great sun-spot wave is eleven years and rather less than one month, Jupiter's period of revolution is eleven years and about *ten* months, a discrepancy of nine months, which would amount up to five and a half years (or modify perfect agreement into perfect disagreement) in seven or eight cycles.

But accepting the association between weather and the sun-spot changes as demonstrated (which is granting a great deal to the believers in solar weather-prediction), have we any reason to believe that by a long-continued study of the sun the great problem of foretelling the weather can be solved? This question, as I have already pointed out, must not be hastily answered. It is one of national, nay, of cosmopolitan importance. If answered in the affirmative, there is scarcely any expense which would be too great for the work suggested; but all the more careful must we be not to answer it in the affirmative, if the true answer should be negative.

But it appears to me that so soon as the considerations dealt with

above have been fairly taken into account, there can be no possible doubt or difficulty in replying to the question. The matter has in effect, though not in intention, been tested experimentally, and the experiments, when carried out under the most favourable conditions, have altogether failed. To show that this is so, I take the position of affairs before Schwabe began that fine series of observations which ended in the discovery of the great spot-period of eleven years. Let us suppose that at that time the question had been mooted whether it might not be possible, by a careful study of the sun, to obtain some means of predicting the weather. The argument would then have run as follows :—"The sun is the great source of light and heat ; that orb is liable to changes which must in all probability affect the supply of light and heat ; those changes may be periodical and so predictable ; and as our weather must to some extent depend on the supply of light and heat, we may thus find a means of predicting weather changes." The inquiry might then have been undertaken, and undoubtedly the great spot-period would have been detected, and with this discovery would have come that partial power of predicting the sun's condition which we now possess,—that is, the power of saying that in such and such a year, taken as a whole, spots will be numerous or the reverse. Moreover, meteorological observations conducted simultaneously would have shown that, as the original argument supposed, the quantity of heat supplied by the sun varies to a slight degree with the varying condition of the sun. Corresponding magnetic changes would be detected ; and also those partial indications of a connexion between phenomena of wind and rain and the sun's condition which have been indicated above. All this would be exceedingly interesting to men of science. *But*,—supposing all this had been obtained at the nation's expense, and the promise had been held out that the means of predicting weather would be the reward, the non-scientific tax-paying community might not improbably inquire what was the worth of these discoveries to the nation or to the world at large. Be it understood that I am not here using the *cui bono* argument. As a student of science, I utterly repudiate the notion that before scientific researches are undertaken, it must be shown that they will *pay*. But it is one thing to adopt this mean and contemptible view of scientific research, and quite another to countenance projects which are based *ab initio* upon the ground that they will more than repay their cost. Now, I think, if the nation made the inquiry above indicated, and under the circumstances mentioned, it would be very difficult to give a satisfactory reply. The tax-payers would say, "We have supplied so many thousands of pounds to found national observatories for the cultivation of the physics of science, and we have paid so many thousands of pounds yearly to the various students of science who have kindly given their services in the management of these observatories ; let

us hear what are the utilitarian results of all this outlay? We do not want to hear of scientific discoveries, but of the promised means of predicting the weather." The answer would be, "We have found that storms in the tropics are rather more numerous in some years than others, the variations having a period of eleven years; we can assert pretty confidently that auroras follow a similar law of frequency; south-west winds blow more commonly at Oxford, but less commonly elsewhere, when the sun-spots, following the eleven-year period, are at a maximum; and more rain falls with south-westerly winds than with south-easterly winds at Oxford and elsewhere, but less at St. Petersburg and elsewhere, when sun-spots are most numerous, while the reverse holds when the spots are rare." I incline to think that on being further informed that these results related to averages only, and gave no means of predicting the weather for any given day, week, or month, even as respects the unimportant points here indicated, the British tax-payer would infer that he had thrown away his money. I imagine that the army of observers who had gathered these notable results would be disbanded rather unceremoniously, and that for some considerable time science (as connected, at any rate, with promised "utilitarian" results) would stink in the nostrils of the nation.

But this is very far, indeed, from being all. Nay, we may almost say that this is nothing. Astronomers *know* the great spot period; they have even ascertained the existence of longer and shorter periods less marked in character; and they have ascertained the laws according to which other solar features besides the spots vary in their nature. It is certain that whatever remains to be discovered must be of a vastly less marked character. If then the discovery of the most striking law of solar change has led to no results having the slightest value in connection with the problem of weather-prediction, if periodic solar changes of a less marked character have been detected which have no recognisable bearing on weather changes, what can be hoped from the recognition of solar changes still more recondite in their nature? It is incredible that the complex phenomena involved in meteorological relations regarded as a whole, those phenomena which are but just discernibly affected by the great sun-spot period, should respond to changes altogether insignificant even when compared with the development and decay of a single small sun-spot. It appears to me, therefore, that it is the duty of the true lover of science to indicate the futility of the promises which have been mistakenly held out; for it cannot be to the credit of science, or ultimately to its advantage, if government assistance be obtained on false pretences for any branch of scientific research.

RICHD. A. PROCTOR.

MARGARET AND ELIZABETH.

BY KATHERINE SAUNDERS,
AUTHOR OF "GIDEON'S ROCK."

CAPTAIN HECTOR BROWNE'S JOURNAL—PART VIII.

WHEN I went to 'Lizbeth's cottage, leaving Joshua in the chapel porch, I found there was company with her, at dinner; so I came back to him, and we agreed it would be better to bide our time. He soon got from me that the minister chap was one of the company, which made him quiet and unlike himself, all the time we were at our own bread-and-cheese dinner, in the garden of the Transome Arms.

We sat smoking, all the afternoon, in the little arbour, thinking much of people not far from us, and feeling dreary, and strange, and deserted, as we remembered how little they, most likely, were thinking upon us.

We agreed I was not to go to 'Lizbeth's again till the evening, at such an hour as her company would most likely be gone.

It was coming on a little dusk before Joshua would let me go. Then, just as I was starting, all his qualms came upon him again.

"I must go with you," says he. "I must see her close before she knows me. I must know just how it is with her. Look you, friend-in-need, I'll go as an old messmate of yours. I'll be anything for her not to know me while I watch her. Yes, yes; she's true as gold, I know, and gold will bear proving. Say no more, old chap; I'm coming along with you. You ask about your wife first, then do as you were going to do: tell her my story as another man's story, while I sit and hold my tongue."

It was no use gainsaying him.

We came to 'Lizbeth's cottage.

"This is well," says Josh; "there's no light but the fire; it's too dark to tell faces. Who is that in the door?"

"Hush!" I said, and we stood back behind a line of fishing-nets, where we could see and hear.

Who was it at the door? Josh knew well enough it was the minister and Elizabeth taking leave of each other.

"Michael," says she, "you are one of those who seem to take light out of the house when they depart from it. Now, do come to me again whenever you visit your sisters. Think of me as one of them, and do not pass me by. Have I your promise?"

They came out together, and we could see Elizabeth meant to go with him to the turn of the cliff, as it was her custom with any who visited her. We could not see their faces, at least only very dimly; but there was that in the sharp turn of the lad's head as she said would he think of her as one of his sisters that told poor Josh too much.

"All women are my sisters, Elizabeth Vandereck," said the young man, as they slowly went by our line of nets, "but one woman is different from all the rest—is more to me in every way, more good, more beautiful, more dear. Surely, Elizabeth, this is not merely my soul's sister, like the rest; is she not something nearer, sweeter, more necessary to my spirit? You say you were amazed and overjoyed at my discourse to-day, and others have said the same. Oh! may I not tell you and them, Elizabeth, why I have been able to speak as I have done? God gives me thoughts as rich and good at all times, but I have not power to give them to his people as He gives them to me. In the trouble of their birth from my worn brain too often they lose their beauty and have no power to keep an eye from closing, let alone a heart from sin. But to-day, oh! best beloved, my thoughts have rested in you, and have lived and kept the fragrance and beauty given by their Maker—even as flowers do in a vase of fresh water."

He went on talking till they were past our hearing. We watched them go along the beach. We saw that Elizabeth turned towards him and spoke to him; and as she did so the lad dropped his head. Then we saw that he again spoke, lifting up his head and changing his weak, lagging step to a step that was suddenly eager and strong, and his form was straight as a dart, and his white hands, one clenched and one open, striking each other in a sort of passion. Then Elizabeth drooped her head and hid her face in her apron, and the other went on till, all of a sudden, he clapped his hand to his side and staggered. Then both stopped, and we saw that he was sitting on the stones and she bending over him, holding her handkerchief to his mouth. I knew nothing of Joshua's feeling then. I only felt that the line on which we leaned, where the nets and jackets were hung, was being strained and dragged down under his arms.

Presently the minister rose, and Elizabeth held his arm till a person, who was evidently coming to meet him, reached the spot where they stood. Then she shook hands with him, and saw him take the arm of the man who had come up. As she dropped his hand, the minister fell upon her shoulder, and Elizabeth put her arm round him as if he had been a child, and kissed his forehead. Then they went their way, and she came homewards, slowly, with her apron to her eyes.

She had no sooner come to the place where we stood behind the nets than the line, which had been strained and strained under Joshua's weight all this time, broke, and down go the nets (our screen), and there stands Elizabeth, face to face with us.

It is me she stares at, and that first goes towards her.

"I should know that face," says she.

"If saints should know anything of sinners you should," says I.

"Hector Browne!" she cries, holding out her hands.

"If you can speak that name and hold my hand at the same time, 'Lizabeth, England is still home to me."

She looked at me, and laughed, as she shook my hand. I *knew*

then all was well with you. Meantime, Josh was standing silent as the grave behind me. So, as she said, "Come, come in," I looked over my shoulder and answered,—

"Thankee, 'Lizbeth, but my mate's a bit of a stranger in these parts, and——and scarce knows where to go."

"And where should he go, then, if he is just from sea and a stranger?" asks she, looking at Josh through the dusk; "where but to the fireside of a sailor's widow? Bring him in, Hector. The likes of him were always welcome here when my Josh was alive; and now that I have you to stand as master of the house a little while, I may surely have in who I like. Come, master, will you follow us?"

Josh bowed his head, and followed us.

Joshua Vandereck followed us into 'Lizbeth's cottage, and the room was nearly dark, and he went towards the fire and sat down in a large old elbow-chair, that used to be called his. He did this instantly, and without thinking.

I felt a little afraid as to whether it would not startle her, and stood before him, in front of the fire, as she spoke to me.

"And what's had you all this time, Hector Browne?" says she. "Have you kept away for the same reason that you went? Have you had no pity, all these many months—these nigh two years—for her that's watched for you?"

"'Lizbeth," I said, "she shall watch no more! Wait till you know all that I and my mate have gone through."

"This chap," I said, standing well in front of Joshua, as he hung down his head looking into the fire, "has been on an island long years a slave to a lot of savages. I found him there. We ran away from them together. We've gone through what would fill a hundred books. We cried at the sight of English ground, like babies born over again. We are going to find my mate's wife, 'Lizbeth. She thinks him dead; we are going to find her." And I drew her away from Josh, and spoke lower. "And my mate, he's getting afraid of finding her—afraid of how it will be with her when we do find her. She had heard that he was dead; she was a comely woman, and young. He has qualms, you see; and it's natural, 'Lizbeth. The faithfulest may be tempted sometimes. You, yourself, 'Lizbeth; you always said you'd never marry again; but I daresay even your mind's changed by this time."

"Not it, Hector," she said, moving about to spread some supper for us. And she went to the door to see if she could light on some boy to send for beer for us.

While she stood at the door with a jug in her hand, she caught sight of the stars coming out over the sea, and said,—

"You will have a fine night for your walk," and stood still looking at them.

"Speak of him—speak of him," muttered Josh.

I knew he meant the minister; but I was sore afraid of bearing too hard on even 'Lizbeth's faithful heart.

"Yes," I said, "we shall have it fine, and so will the gentleman you parted with just now, 'Lizbeth."

I thought she coloured; but it was too dark for me to be sure.

"Ah! you saw him; that was a dear friend of mine, Hector," she said; "and it is but small hope I have of ever seeing him again, unless I could——"

She stopped and lifted her apron to her eyes.

"What, 'Lizbeth?" I asked her.

"Bring my mind to do what I have told you I cannot do—marry again."

"You don't take to him enough for that then, Liz?"

"I love him dearly."

She answered so pat, I was taken aback completely. I was determined she should not be tried so far as Josh wished to try her.

"My mate makes himself at home, you see," I said, as Josh sat stooping and warming his hands at the fire. "We are put to it, Liz, to think how to break the news to his wife."

"Ah! the woman thought him dead, you say?" she asked me.

"Ay, dead these five"—a nudge from Josh—"these fifteen years well-nigh."

She gave the jug to a little fisher boy, then came in, after kissing her hand seawards, as I had seen her often do before shutting out the daylight and lighting her candle.

I knew I might safely speak of that, so I did.

"Who's that for, Liz?" I said; "the minister?"

"What?" she asked me.

I said, "You kissed your hand to somebody just now."

She came and stood between us two at the fire as we sat, and looked at me and said,—

"Do you never, as you come by a churchyard at dusk, and pass by a grave of one you loved, do you never stop and say 'Good-night'? Now, I have my husband's grave for ever at my door, and how can I help saying 'Good-morning' and 'Good-night' to him? I do it always. What does your friend suffer from? He seems in pain."

Josh was swaying as he bent down to the fire.

"I am very silly, Hector," says 'Lizbeth; "but I felt as I could hardly breathe away from the sea and him. It seems such company, you wouldn't believe. Now I was quite ashamed of myself before the children on their last birthday. When I had dressed them and made them little presents, nothing would satisfy me but I must take them while they were clean—which, you know, they never last long—I must take them down to the water's side and stand there with them, just as if he could feel glad with me at their being so well-looking and tall for their age; and we picked up a wreath of seaweed and called it father's present. The neighbours tell me I should teach 'em better; but why does it matter being silly if it gives us comfort?"

She had been speaking her last words to Josh himself. He made

a great effort to answer her, and managed to say the very last words he ought to have said.

"I see—I see!" he muttered.

'Lizbeth's eyes were on him, sharp as needles, then they turned to me with a tear in them and a smile.

"How much you are alike," says she, "all you sailors. I could have fancied——" And then she stopped to take in the beer the boy had just brought, and she said no more about us sailors being alike. But I noticed she looked his way more, and took a great deal more interest in him, since she fancied he was a little like Josh.

"You must tell me how your mate here fares, Hector," she said, as she stood turning the steaks on the fire; "if his wife is well, and how she bears the surprise, and all about it."

She looked down on his bent head, and I fancied another tear glittered in her eye.

"It will be a shock to her," she said presently; "but she will bear it." I said, "Do you think so, 'Lizbeth?"

She looked at me and nodded.

"Do you think *you* could?" I said.

"I could what?" asked 'Lizbeth.

"Bear a shock like she will have to bear?"

"Yes; I think so," said 'Lizbeth; "but I don't know," she said, laying down her fork, and putting both hands to her head, "it would seem as if the world was turning indeed." She said to Joshua, "You must be very careful."

"Ah! I see. I—I—will," muttered Josh.

"Try and tell us, 'Liz," I said, "how you would have us let it out to her, judging by your own feelings. Now, try and tell us."

She stood and thought a minute.

"I would prepare her," she said, presently, "as for some sorrow, because she would turn to God to help her to bear it: and, once in His presence, she could endure anything. When she is on her knees, and says, 'Now, Lord, Thy will be done,' then let her know His will is not harsh, but gracious towards her; then let her know the truth, and tell her that joy should be taken from Him with a seemly meekness as well as sorrow."

"But suppose," said Josh, in a low, muttering voice I should never have known as his—"suppose she loves another man by this."

"Ishan't suppose anything of the kind," said 'Lizbeth; "and don't you."

"You are changed, and why not another woman?" he said, in a loud whisper.

"Changed?" 'Lizbeth repeated after him. "How do you mean, master?"

"You said—you——" he stopped, and signed me to go on.

"What does he mean?" asked 'Lizbeth.

"He means to say you owned to caring for another since you lost your husband," I blundered out, afraid of mischief in every word I said.

She turned on Josh and drew herself up a little proudly.

"You mistake me, sir," she said to him. "I care no more for this young man than I should do if my husband had never left me. I look on him with that wonder with which we cannot help looking on those beings who have begun here the endless life which most of us never begin till we die. Ah! master," she said, sighing, as she knelt down to put the plate of steaks on the fender, "may God above us grant that your wife, in her supposed widowhood, may have been and may still be as true to you as I have been, and still am, and always shall be, to my poor drowned one, who seems to me crying in every wave that breaks, 'Remember me!'"

"I've said those words sometimes," says Joshua, in his whisper; "I've said it to the waves that washed my prison shore; perhaps the sea bore them to my wife."

"And perhaps," said I to 'Lizbeth, "*your* husband did not die as soon as you thought, but lived on some desert place like my mate here, and really said those very words you think you've heard."

"You know well, Hector," answered Elizabeth, as calm as I ever saw her, "I never suffered doubt or enjoyed hope on this matter." Then she turned to Josh and said,—

"It was all very sudden and certain about *my* husband's death. God knew my weakness and added no suspense to my sorrow; He made it simple for me as we try to make a lesson for a child."

"I see—I see!" said Joshua; and 'Lizbeth, as she stooped before the fire, turned upon him again a sharp, half-affrighted look.

"It's very strange," said she to me, "but, Hector, your friend reminds me of some one I once knew. It's foolish, and comes of living all alone with the children, I suppose; but I am as childish as they, and I have had my Josh before my eyes this last half-hour, all through that poor youth Michael speaking of things that would have caused him pain."

She had her eyes on Joshua as she spoke. I saw them look from his hair to his broad shoulder, to his hand and the marks on it, which seemed to send her glance darting to his face. Josh, as he felt them, lifted his head slowly and looked at her.

She whitened; she shrank away from him; she came to me, and caught hold of my arm with both her hands. She looked at me as if she would ask what it was that ailed her.

I took her hand and tried to keep it from shaking.

"Elizabeth," I said, "do you think this mate of mine like Joshua?"

"What are you doing to me?" she moaned out. "Hector, what are you doing to me to turn my brain like this?"

"Don't you remember saying, *Liz*, that the Almighty's will was not always hard?" I said to her. "Suppose, now, by any wonderful chance, such as we hear of sometimes, your Joshua was not dead; or, not going so far as that, suppose his body had been found, or news had come to hand that you ought to hear; say he had lived longer than you knew, and been slaughtered by the savages, or at any rate

that there was something particular you ought to hear ; but you must get quiet first, or I would be afraid to tell you anything."

"Have you something *certain* to tell me—quite, quite certain?" she said, looking me through and through.

"I have, 'Lizbeth Vandereck," I said, "but not till you are quieter and stop trembling."

"You are right," said she, pressing her white lips together. "It is not seemly to take His will thus, be it what it may. You are right, force me to wait till I am still and my heart is quiet."

She put one hand to her side and, leaning on the table and chairs with the other as she went, crossed the room to where her Bible lay on the white cloth, with flowers before it, all as usual. She clasped her hands over it and closed her eyes and stood so till she had ceased trembling. Then she opened the Bible at that page where Joshua's death was written down, kissed the line, and raised her eyes,—holier and brighter I never saw,—and clasped her hands on her breast, and said in a clear voice,—

"Thy will be done."

Then, in a fainter voice,—

"Now, Hector, I am ready."

I looked at Joshua. He rose. His form seemed to grow younger than I had ever seen it ; his rags took a strange grace ; his face was bright as any bridegroom's.

He went to her. She turned her eyes upon him.

"My wife," said he, standing before her like a prince, so rich he felt in knowledge of her faithful love. "Your beggar has come back to you, a beggar still."

She fell back a little, resting her hand against her Bible table, and staring at him while drops came out of her forehead, and her eyes seemed ready to start from her head. Then she began to pant, and lean back as if she would drop, shrinking from him, so that he durst not approach her ; and next she looked to me and moved her arms and shrieked,—

"Hector, waken me—help me ! I suffer nightmare—madness ! What is this ? Do you see ? What is it stand here in my husband's form ?"

"It is him, 'Lizbeth," I said. "It is Joshua."

"Joshua !" she repeated, with a pale, wild look at me. "Oh, Hector ! God is great ; but could He do this ? Could He bring *my* lost one from his deep tomb ? Joshua !"

"My wife !"

She clasped her hands and crouched before him, staring at his face. Then she went and laid a hand on each shoulder and looked at him, and the changes that his years of hardship had made in him, with the piteous, puzzled doubt of a child who sees its mother in new garments. She touched and wondered over his darkened hair and great beard ; the foreign stone he had pierced and used as a button for his coat ; then again she looked into his eyes, and was satisfied, and smiled, and fell with her cheek against his and her arms round his neck ; and, as

if her faithful life cared not to flow further than this glad moment, and this meeting, she swooned away.

It was all very well for 'Lizbeth, when she came to herself, to rail in a sort of merry passion at the world for the misery it causes by driving folks asunder as she and Joshua had been driven. It was all very well for *her* to say,—

"Don't those who are happy together know better than their neighbours what's enough for 'em? And, ah laws! it's few gets off as well as Josh and me when they once begin to listen to what's expected of 'em. Suppose they *do* what's expected, five times out o' six, I'll warrant by the time they're done it they've forgot in trying to please the world how to please each other and themselves. *Then* says your neighbours, 'How comfortable So-and-so is, they've got all as they should.' '*All*,' says somebody, 'why I don't believe they care a jot for each other;' or, 'I believe they're not so happy as somebody else that hasn't tried to please the world at all.'"

As I said, this was all very well for Liz to hold to, but for myself, I did not intend to go back to *my* wife a beggar.

It was different with Joshua Vandereck. *He* had it in his power to give happiness in every look and every word. I felt to need much more than looks or words to show anything of what I felt for Margaret. I felt to need to give her all the wishes of her gentle heart and clever little head, before I could expect her to know my love as Liz knew Joshua's.

And I was right in this, for I know now by her letters a change has come to her. She's no longer meek and patient in my absence, but says many little sharp things by which I know that the comforts by which I have surrounded her have spoken for me, and she *does* wish for me back.

And I *am* homeward-bound from the third prosperous voyage to our island in the very ship that Transome, 'Lizbeth's rich uncle, set us off in after Josh and I had told our story to him.

Vandereck is a rich man now—Liz goes dressed *beyond* what pleases her neighbours. My Margaret has all that her pretty simple way make her "wish for," and I—well, I am homeward bound.

I have just read this journal to my wife, and close it with a hand that shakes with joy at the sight of her dear eyes looking at me as they never did before.

She wishes me to add one thing which I had not forgotten, but which I should not have written down here if she did not wish it so much.

It is that I was fortunate enough on my second voyage to be the means of saving the life of Captain Kennedy.

THE SAINT PAULS MAGAZINE.

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THE OWL'S NEST IN THE CITY.

CHAPTER I.

"Thus bad begins, but worse remains behind."—SHAKESPEARE.

LEADING out of B—— Street in the City, there is—perhaps I should say was, it is long since I have seen the spot—an old-fashioned little square, called X Court. The entrance to it is under a low, broad archway; and the square itself is composed, if my memory serve me well, of not more than four or five houses. The pavement of the court is grass-grown and decayed; the houses, which were once handsome family mansions, have a melancholy, tumbledown, and, as the Scotch would say, uncanny look. The entrance halls are large and lofty, but rendered very dark and gloomy by the thick crust of dirt and cobwebs on the windows. The staircases are broad and handsome; but the carved balustrades are so crooked and worm-eaten, that one is tempted to believe it is only their excessive greasiness that prevents them from crumbling under the touch.

I believe all of these houses are now divided into separate sets of offices or chambers, but the house in the right-hand corner of the court, wherein the events I am about to relate took place, was, at the time I speak of, entirely in the occupation of one legal firm, the firm of Prescott and Earle. The offices of this firm were upon the ground floor. The upper stories were inhabited by Mr. Prescott, with his family, and his partner, Mr. Earle.

I think I must have been about eight years of age when my mother died, leaving me to the guardianship of my Uncle Prescott; and my nurse told me I was to go to London to live with him. My father died in my infancy, and my mother had lived since his death in a retired village in Wales, from which I was now despatched to London in charge of one of the clerks of the lawyer who had arranged her affairs. This clerk appeared to regard me simply as a sort of peculiarly inconvenient parcel to be delivered to my uncle, the right side

upwards. I remember, as if it were yesterday, the sinking of heart that came over me—it must have been an instinctive prevision of ill—when, after our long and weary journey to London, we entered X Court. Having been lamed by an accident which occurred soon after my birth, and being extremely delicate in health, I had been from my infancy accustomed to live the life of a petted invalid. Incapable of joining in the sports of other children, I had been my mother's constant companion, and had already learned to observe and to think much, at an age when most children have done little else than laugh and play. No doubt Mr. Slack, the clerk who accompanied me to London, must have been much bored with his sickly little companion. He was not unkind to me ; but he made no attempt to render the journey less wearisome. Perhaps he was discouraged by my tears, for I think the only effort at conversation he made during the whole journey was when he asked me how old I was, and received for answer that I did not know.

"Too old to be such a cry-baby, anyhow," said he ; but perceiving that my tears flowed the faster for this, he began to whistle "Yankee Doodle." To this day I never hear the tune without a vision rising before me of Mr. Slack on the coach seat opposite me, whistling and looking at me all the while with his little green eyes half shut, his hands deep in his trousers pockets, and his whole attitude expressive of lordly contempt.

This imposing spectacle awed me for a time, but I soon became sufficiently accustomed to it to lapse again into tears, partly caused by grief for my mother, and partly by fears of my unknown uncle. When I was too tired to cry any more, I went to sleep ; and, indeed, my whole recollection of that interminable journey, by coach and railway from Wales to London, might be drearily summed up as sleep and tears.

The noise and bustle of London completely terrified me, and when, after the roar of Cheapside, we turned into the comparative quiet of B—— Street, I remember that I felt a sensation of great relief, and shut my eyes in the hope of forgetting my woes in sleep again ; but Mr. Slack shook me roughly by the arm, saying : "Hold up, little one ; here we are !"

At that moment the hackney coach drove under the dark archway of X Court, and a chill ran through me—prophetic enough, though I knew it not—at the sudden gloom. I would have accepted any amount of noise and bustle then, in exchange for the ghostly look of my new home. The dark hall, into the depths of which my eyes, wearied by that morning's journey through the glare of an August sun, could not penetrate, was an awful place to me ; and though I had certainly no reason to love my companion, I remember that I clung very closely to him as we stumbled up the uneven stairs, and begged him very earnestly not to leave me in that horrid house.

"Nonsense, child," said Mr. Slack, sharply, knocking at the outer door on the first floor; "why this is your uncle's house, where you are going to live!"

The ready tears ran down my cheeks again at this; but I attempted no further entreaties. At that moment the door was opened by a dirty, ugly, old woman, with a broom in her hand, a cap of no particular shape perched very much awry on the top of her head, and some straggling grey hair sticking out fantastically underneath it. I was deeply read in fairy lore, and instantly set her down in my own mind for a malevolent Mother Bunch. She took me gently by the hand, however; and wiping away my tears with her greasy apron, recently intimate with raw onions, she said to Mr. Slack—

"So this is the little lame nephew, I suppose?"

"Yes, ma'am," said he; "and a precious bore he's been to bring!"

I hid my face against the apron on hearing this, while the old woman rejoined—

"Ah, of course—of course! Children is, you know, a great bother!"

At this encouraging remark my tears flowed faster than ever. I had seen Mr. Slack's contempt for my weakness, but had unconsciously attributed it to the peculiar loftiness of that gentleman's spirit; and this view of the case was new to me. I had never dreamed that children were "a bother." My mother and her one servant, who had been my nurse, had certainly thought nothing a trouble that could brighten the existence of their lame darling; and, with the unconscious egotism of childhood, I had accepted their untiring devotion without for an instant realising the trouble I gave. A sense of degradation was now added to my former dejection, which was quite overwhelming to me.

"Mr. Prescott ain't in," continued the old woman; "most like he's in the office below—first doer on the right when you get down the stairs. You can leave the child with me."

"All right," said Mr. Slack, running downstairs without a word of adieu to me.

The old woman shut the door; my last brittle link with Wales was broken, and I was alone among strangers.

She now took me up in her arms and carried me upstairs to her kitchen, which, strangely enough (but everything was odd and strange in that queer house), was on the top floor. Then seating me on the table before her, she said, "There, there, be quiet, can't you? what are you crying for now, eh?" The words were rough, but the tone was not unkindly. I did not exactly know what I was crying for at that minute, but I knew, vaguely and generally, that I was intensely wretched; so making an unconscious summary of that wretchedness and its cause, I sobbed out, "Mother's dead."

Hereupon the old woman took me in her arms again, and sitting down upon a low chair by the fire, began to rock backwards and

forwards, saying, "Ah, poor lamb, worse luck, worse luck ! but then, you see, the Lord took her, and she's gone to heaven ; and isn't that a deal better than if she'd run away and left you ?"

I could see but little meaning in her words ; but there was pity and consolation in her tone, and to be once again held to any woman's bosom and spoken softly to, after two whole days of contempt and Yankee Doodle, was soothing and comforting to my spirit. My tears gradually grew less and less, and at last ceased altogether.

The old woman then gave me some tea and cold meat ; and when I had finished she said, "Now come and see your cousins."

Taking me by the hand she led me first through a long unlighted passage, passing by several half-open doors, leading to ghostly-looking unfurnished rooms, and then down stairs into the large hall on the first floor, where I was very uncomfortably surprised by seeing a hidden doorway in the pannelling suddenly open, and a tall, pale, thin man appear at the top of a narrow-winding staircase in the dark opening. "There's your uncle, child," said my conductor ; "make your bow."

I believe I did attempt some sort of an awkward bow ; but the expression of my uncle's face was cold and uninviting, and he had made his appearance in so supernatural a manner—the very door having vanished again,—that I felt anything but comfortable, and clung very tightly to the old woman's gown, resisting her attempts to push me towards him.

"So this is poor little Ned, is it?" said my uncle. "Is he very lame, Mrs. Withers ? Come here, child."

I did not stir.

"Lame enough, indeed, sir," answered Mrs. Withers, "and never likely to be good for much, I'm thinking, worse luck."

"Hum !" said my uncle, "he looks sharp enough in all conscience ; why, his face is like a weasel."

It has often struck me as strange that grown people will not unfrequently discuss a child's defects in its presence, with as much coolness and indifference as if it were a statue. Yet children are painfully sensitive on such subjects, and their averted looks and tingling cheeks generally speak plainly enough of the fluttering and burning of the little heart that is needlessly wounded by such thoughtless and unfeeling words.

My uncle now opened the door of one of the front rooms, and beckoning to me, said, "Here, Ned, come and see your cousins."

Curiosity impelled me forward. I left Mrs. Withers' protection and followed him. "Here, James," he cried, addressing a boy of about my own age, who was seated at the table laboriously inscribing moral instances in a copy-book, "this is your little Welsh cousin, Ned. Dick, you rascal, get down this moment ; how dare you spoil the furniture in that way !"

This was addressed to a fine, handsome boy, who was sitting astride on one of the arms of an old black horsehair sofa, and flogging the same with all his might, evidently glorying in the blissful illusion that he was galloping at full speed.

The lad addressed as James came shyly towards me and timidly held out his hand. He was nearly as pale and cold-looking as his father, and as he fixed his dark eyes on me, I was struck with the strange resemblance between them. Before I had time to take his hand, Dick, who had jumped off the sofa when my uncle spoke, ran up to me, saying, "How d'y'e do, cousin? can you play at horses? See here, you shall be my horse."

His sweet, frank, cordial smile delighted me, and I held out my arms willingly enough, in order to allow him to fasten around them the cord he held in his hand, when my uncle said, fiercely, "Hold your tongue, sir; don't you see the lad is lame? This is your cousin James," he added, turning to me; "take his hand, he will play with you."

I did as I was bid; but I could not remove my eyes from the rebel, Dick, who was making faces at my uncle and sparring at him behind his back.

Led by my fixed look of astonishment, Mr. Prescott turned round, and, catching him in the act, hit him a sharp box on the ear, which the offender received without a cry, though his face turned crimson with rage and pain. He flew at my uncle like a wild cat, striving to bite and scratch in return; when Mrs. Withers, coming in, got between them, saying, "Let him be, sir, let him be; blood is blood, worse luck, and it ain't no fault of his'n."

These mysterious words appeared to produce some effect. Mr. Prescott turned away and looked at the copy-book in which James had been writing. "Good lad," he said, with some approach to softness of manner, "you'll soon be of use in the office, I declare. Mrs. Withers," he added, "I am going out; let the children play together and make acquaintance before they go to bed."

Mrs. Withers gave a sort of grunt in reply. She did not appear to be of a demonstrative nature.

As soon as the door shut upon Mr. Prescott, Dick buried his red face in the greasy apron, and burst into a passion of tears. "Give over, child, give over," she whispered, "he'll hear you."

The other lad looked on for a while in silence, and then went up to Dick and said, "Never mind, Dicky dear, father's gone out now."

"I hate him, I hate him," sobbed Dick; while Mrs. Withers vainly tried to quiet him, and I gazed at the scene in silent horror. It was all unspeakably dreadful to me. I had never seen a blow given to a child in my life, and I fear my young heart echoed the passionate words, "I hate him."

Gradually poor Dick sobbed himself to sleep in Mrs. Withers' arms

Neither James nor I ventured to move or speak; the room grew darker and drearier every moment, and the silence, broken only by an occasional unconscious sob from the sleeping boy, became dreadfully oppressive to a sensitive, nervous child like me. At last the old woman rose, and bidding us follow her, carried Dick upstairs into a large, meagrely-furnished, carpetless bed-room, undressed him, and placed him, still asleep, in one of two uncurtained beds; then, telling James to make haste and go to bed, she beckoned me to follow her out of the room. Opening the door of a dismal-looking chamber opposite, in which stood a tall funereal four-post bed, she told me I was to sleep there. This last blow, after so much agitation and distress, was overwhelming. The remembrance of my pretty little white-curtained room in Wales came vividly before me; I called to mind how carefully my nurse, Jenny, always set open the door of communication, that I might see the cheerful light in my mother's room. The oppressive gloom around me seemed even more unsupportable by the contrast, and I clung as tight as I could to Mrs. Withers, exclaiming, in such terror as I think only nervous children know, "Oh, ma'am, I can't, I can't, indeed—I cannot sleep in this dreadful room."

"God bless the child, how he trembles!" said the old woman, vainly endeavouring to disengage herself from my clinging hands. "There isn't another bed ready in the whole house; you must sleep here, I tell you."

"I won't! I can't!" said I, screaming out the words in a perfect agony of desperation and terror.

Mrs. Withers hesitated a few moments, and then, as if struck by a sudden idea, she returned to the room where we had left the two other children, I still clutching fast at her gown, and taking up the sleeping Dick in her arms, she carried him into the dreaded chamber, and laying him down in the hearse-like bed, said: "Look here, you silly child; Dicky will sleep with you; he ain't afraid of nothing, he ain't." Then holding the candle to his face, she added, "See if he don't look for all the world like a blessed angel."

Children have generally, I think, but little perception of the beautiful; but I well remember how completely I felt the truth of her words, and how the sense of them comforted me. Dick's long eyelashes were still glistening with tears, and his cheeks were flushed and heated, but his lips were parted with a happy, tranquil smile, and his bright golden hair seemed to me indeed like the halo round the angel's head in a picture of the Annunciation I remembered in my mother's room at home, which I had loved for its calm sanctity and beauty, though without any perception of its meaning. I felt soothed and tranquillized without knowing why, and allowed Mrs. Withers to undress me and lay me by his side, without attempting any further resistance.

I cannot tell how James liked the loneliness in which he was left, for Mrs. Withers took no heed of him, and my own terrors had absorbed me so entirely that I had forgotten his existence. I could not sufficiently compose myself to repeat the simple prayers my mother had taught me, but I felt dreadfully wicked for the omission, and went to sleep with the burden of this, to me, terrible crime, added to the load of misery and unhappiness which was already sufficiently heavy on my young heart. Perhaps I should have felt it even more, had I known then how little chance there was of my resuming the habit.

I have dwelt thus long upon the small incidents of my first day at X Court, partly because even at this distance of time every word and look that passed on that, to me, ever memorable day, are as vividly impressed upon my memory as if they had been photographed on my brain, and partly because, when I look back upon the dreary years that immediately succeeded, it stands forth in my recollection as a sort of typical day, alike representing the trials of that period of my life, and shadowing forth the deeper sorrows of the future.

CHAPTER II.

"I never married—but I think I know
That sons should not be educated so."—BYRON.

THE next morning I was awakened by hearing Dick moving about the room. I shall never forget the dismal wretchedness of that waking. Startled when I first opened my eyes upon the dark curtains and hangings of the bed, it was some moments before I clearly understood where I was; and when the sad events of the past week recurred to me one by one, a sense of hopelessness and oppression came over me, such as I hope few children have ever known. It seemed to weigh me down, and I made no effort to rise, until Dick, who was already half-dressed, called out to me that I had better make haste, or I should "catch it." I had no distinct idea of what he meant by "catching it," but I saw plainly enough that it was a threat of evil, and I slowly and awkwardly attempted, for the first time in my life, to put on my own clothes.

While I was thus engaged, my eyes fell upon the portrait of a lady which hung over the fire-place. The brilliant eyes and bright golden hair reminded me immediately of Dick; but the hopeless, sullen, and resentful expression puzzled me. When I looked at his bright, cloudless, generous face, I doubted whether my first idea that the portrait resembled him, was correct. I was nevertheless so attracted by the picture, that I could scarcely remove my eyes from it, and after looking from it to Dick and turning to it again for the hundredth time, I at last took courage to ask him: "Who is that?"

The question was answered by James, who came in at that moment to call us to breakfast. "That is mother," said he, and then I fancied the picture also resembled him.

"Where is she now?" said I.

"She is dead," he answered; "come to breakfast."

"She didn't die, she ran away," said Dick.

"Ran away!" said I, in astonishment: "why did she run away? Who frightened her?"

"She is dead," repeated James, solemnly; "father said so."

"It's a lie," said Dick, doggedly. "I mean to run away, too, when I'm a big boy," he whispered to me, "and then I'll go and be a soldier."

In the breakfast-room I saw my uncle's partner, Mr. Earle. He was standing at the window with a bundle of letters and papers in his hand; a tall, handsome man, far superior to Mr. Prescott in manner and appearance; young as I was I felt the difference at once. He smiled at me, and held out his hand. What was it that made me shrink away from his smile? He was very like the portrait of his sister which had fascinated me so much; but there was a something in his look that I feared and disliked.

He took no notice of my reluctance to approach him, and seated himself at the breakfast table opposite Mr. Prescott, without speaking. My uncle read the newspaper during the whole meal, and appeared unconscious of our presence. Mr. Earle occasionally looked from one to another, as he broke the seals of his letters, but did not take the trouble to address us. James, who sat silently eating his breakfast by his father's side, appeared like his image cut out in little. Dick drew figures upon the table-cloth, and rolled up the crumb of his bread into little balls.

There was no want of anything at the breakfast-table except cleanliness; but the air of disorder and neglect around me, so different to the neatness and precision to which I had been accustomed, took away my appetite. No one presided; but each rose in turn, and helped himself to a cup of tea, or a slice of cold meat, without either inviting or appearing to remember the presence of the others. I had never cut a slice of meat, nor poured out a cup of tea in my life; no one offered me anything, and as I had no courage to ask, I sat mournfully looking at the tablecloth until Mr. Earle abruptly asked me if I meant to starve myself, adding, that if I wanted my breakfast, I had better make haste, as it was time to go to school. Upon this I rose, and contrived, awkwardly enough, to pour out a cup of tea. I spilled a great deal upon the tablecloth in my confusion; but that did not add much to the unwholesomeness of its appearance, for it was much stained and very dirty already. I whispered to Dick, who was playing with the knife, to cut me a piece of bread, whereupon he presented me with a huge misshapen piece of crust, which took away the

little appetite I had, and before I had gathered courage to attack it, my uncle rang the bell, and Mrs. Withers appeared to carry away the tray. She came into the room with her broom in her hand, and, indeed, I afterwards observed that she was seldom to be seen without it, though I am not aware that she ever used it to the end for which brooms are supposed to have been created.

There was no change in her appearance, unless it may be that her cap was a little more awry, and suggested the idea that she had been to bed in it. She asked me, rather sharply, why I did not eat my breakfast. My uncle looked up from his newspaper, and said, "The child is dainty, I suppose; but he'll soon get the better of that here." The ever-ready tears began to roll down my cheeks at this, and the two boys stared at me in astonishment. Happening to look up at that moment, I saw that Mr. Earle was laughing at me; pride came to my aid, and, gulping down my grief by a strong effort, I said I was not hungry, and walked to the window to hide my confusion.

The two lads now ran for their hats and books, in order to start for school, and my uncle, putting a letter to the schoolmaster into my hand, desired me to follow them. Hereupon Mrs. Withers put my cap on my head so as effectually to cover my eyes, which I have observed older people generally do when they put children's hats on for them. She cautioned my cousins not to walk too fast for me, and slipped a slice of bread and butter into my hand for me to eat as I went along.

At first I felt too dejected to eat; but Dick, who was two years older than I, and very strong for his age, took hold of my arm to help me down stairs with so much gentleness that I felt quite consoled, and before we reached the school-door, my bread and butter were consumed.

As we went in Dick whispered to me: "If any of the boys bully you, you just tell me, that's all." And to do him justice he certainly fought all my battles for me like a young lion, and soon taught all the lads to respect my infirmity. Poor Dick! even then, there was something of the knight-errant about him; he was nobler, juster, and more generous than the rest of us.

It is useless to describe our school. I suppose it was much like other day-schools, but we had the good fortune to have a kind and clever teacher, who possessed the art of interesting us in our lessons, and I think we learned more, and with less reluctance, than most boys, and, possibly because we had no happy home to contrast it with, we did not dislike school. I had long learned to find pleasure in books. James plodded on patiently, because it was his nature to be patient and industrious, and Dick was so clever that the usher took a pride in bringing him forward. On the whole, though we worked hard, we were certainly far happier at school than at home. When we went home in the evening, there was no one to meet us, or to

inquire into our progress. We let ourselves in with a latch-key, and I really believe we learned our lessons because there was nothing else to do. When Mrs. Withers was ready with our supper, she used to lean over the banisters with the eternal broom in her hand, and call to us to go upstairs into the kitchen, where the meal was prepared and spread out in a disorderly manner, upon a table without a cloth. Supper over, the old woman always drove us downstairs again, because our noise gave her the fidgets, as she said ; but, in reality, I think, because our presence interfered with the enjoyment of the contents of a certain teapot, which used to be brought down from a shelf upon our departure, the smell of which suggested no thoughts of the herb that cheers but not inebriates. During the interval between supper and bed-time, we used generally to wander listlessly about the house ; for we had nothing to do, nothing to play with, and nothing to read. Sometimes, however, the desire of physical activity natural to youth would induce us to attempt some boyish game ; but the consequences were almost always disastrous, for we were certain to make too much noise, and disturb Mr. Prescott, who, emerging from the doorway in the panelling that had so alarmed me on the first day of my arrival, invariably began by accusing Dick of all the disturbance. Dick as invariably made some insolent retort ; whereupon my uncle would rush upon him, cane in hand, and belabour him with a fury and passion I cannot think of even now without a shudder.

Dick, struggling, kicking, and biting in self-defence, became every day more nearly a match for Mr. Prescott, and the consequence was, that, exasperated by the resistance offered him, he was often carried away to display a violence perfectly unwarrantable. James and I, only too well used to such scenes, stood by without daring to utter a word, until the noise of the unequal combat reached Mrs. Withers' ears, when she would descend into the office and call Mr. Earle, whose mere appearance was generally sufficient to make my uncle throw the lad from him, and return to his own room. Whenever his exasperation was too great to allow him to notice the interruption, Earle would say, in his peculiar, sneering tone, "Heyday, Prescott ! is this the way you show your fatherly tenderness for your *eldest son* !" At this my uncle would turn round upon him with a volley of oaths and abuse, during the utterance of which poor Dick would escape from his clutches and run upstairs into the bedroom. There, flinging himself upon the funereal four-poster, he would give vent to the sobs and tears his pride had restrained before. I used generally to limp after him as soon as my uncle's back was turned, and sit mournfully on the foot of the bed till the first violence of Dick's passion had subsided, when we would throw our arms round each other's necks and cry together, and Dick would often look up at his mother's portrait with streaming eyes, and say, "I'll run away, too ; I will, I will."

"But, Dick," said I one night, when after a peculiarly fierce contest we had wept ourselves into a sort of composure; "why did your mother run away and leave you here to be beaten? I don't think she could have loved you much, do you?"

"Oh yes she did, though," said Dick. "I know she must have loved me, because she used to kiss me and cry over me at night. I don't know why she ran away though. Perhaps," he added in a low whisper, "perhaps father beat her too."

"But why does James say she is dead?" I asked.

"Oh, he always says what father tells him to say," said Dick, with something of contempt in his tone; "but I know she's not dead; for when people are dead they lie in the house several days, and then they are taken away and buried in the daytime. Now mother went away in the night, and she had her bonnet on."

"Oh, do tell me all about it, Dick!" said I, eagerly.

"It's a very long while ago now," said Dick, "and I don't remember much about it; but I do recollect how she came into my room, and stooped over the bed, and kissed me, and said, 'Poor boy, poor boy, forgive your poor mother.' But then she had often said that before, and I don't know that I should have remembered it so well that night, if she hadn't had her bonnet on. And I cried too, and kissed her, and then I went to sleep, and the next morning mother wasn't here. Then father and uncle Earle quarrelled so that I thought they were going to fight, and I hoped uncle Earle would thrash father, but he didn't. I remember old Withers cried all the morning, and there was no breakfast. When I asked where mother was, they said I was not to speak of her any more: and some time afterwards they all said she was dead."

That was all poor Dick had to tell.

What I have now said of our way of life at X Court may stand to describe its general course during the eight or nine first years of my residence there. I recollect no change of importance during that period, and in looking back over all those long dreary years, I can recall no glimpse of any silver lining to the perpetual cloud of gloom that hung over that strange household. Dick, it is true, became too strong for my uncle to cane, and as soon as he felt himself secure for the future, I really believe ceased to feel any ill-will for the past; though he had certainly but little affection for one whose bearing to him had only changed from violence to indifference.

James grew more awkward and reserved, and though we never quarrelled, there was little intercourse or sympathy between us. All my affection was concentrated on Dick. Mrs. Withers grew gradually older, dirtier, and crosser; yet no one was ever hired to help her. Of course she must have renewed her garments on some occasions during all the years we lived at X Court, but I cannot remember ever to have seen the slightest change in her; and if such a thing

were possible, I should be tempted to say she always wore the identical black cap, wiped the furniture with the identical apron, and progressed about the house with the identical, inoperative broom that she displayed to my alarmed vision when Mr. Slack first handed me over to her care. The house grew to look more neglected and decayed year by year ; but no one ever spoke of painting it, and I had become so accustomed to its dinginess that I had quite lost the desire for cleanliness which tormented me when I first left our prim cottage in Wales. We lads continued to tread the same mill-horse round ; going to school on week days, and—with a few bright exceptions of which I shall presently speak—wandering about the house, or looking out of the dirty windows into the grass-grown court, on the seventh. Nobody ever suggested that we should go to church ; though I dare say we should have been willing enough to try it, for a change, had the idea occurred to us. As a rule, we only saw my uncle and Mr. Earle at breakfast. They each of them became daily more taciturn with us, and more absorbed in business, and when office hours were over, each of them retired to his private room without making any inquiry into our proceedings. I can only attribute our unmurmuring acceptance of a life so unnatural to boys of our age, to the force of habit. We had never experienced anything better, and it did not occur to us, I think, that it would be possible to obtain it.

The gleam of sunlight that pierces the cloud-shadows that overhang my remembrance of this period of our life, is the recollection of certain Sunday excursions to Hampstead Heath or Highgate Wood. My uncle occasionally bestowed a few shillings upon us as pocket-money, and we used to meet in council on these rare occasions, in order to decide how to spend it.

In the winter we generally bought cigars, which we smoked with contraband delight, in one of the empty rooms at the top of the house ; but in the summer, James and Dick used to accompany me to the Blue Posts Inn, Holborn, and deposit me safely in the Hampstead coach. They always performed the journey on foot. I could limp from the coach office at Hampstead, to the place of rendezvous on the heath, by myself. Our favourite spot was under a beautiful group of fir trees, from which there was a most lovely view over Harrow, and beyond. I know not if the fir trees are standing now. Perhaps if I were to revisit the spot I should see little beauty in it ; but in my recollection it appears still an Eden of loveliness and glory. Under the fir trees I used to lie and wait, looking up in dreamy ecstasy at the blue sky shining through their branches, until James and Dick arrived.

I often wonder now that we were never tempted to join in the sports of other boys on the heath ; but I suppose our way of life had made us unsociable. Even with our schoolfellows we were never

intimate : we were not allowed to visit any of them, or invite them home, and I think we had all of us an unconfessed sense that our home was a thing to be concealed ; that we had a life apart, and that it behoved us to be retired. Perhaps, while we were very young, we were influenced by Mrs. Withers' invariable parting words as she despatched us, "When you're done school, lads, you'll come straight home ; and mind and keep yourselves to yourselves while you're there."

We used each of us to take a favourite book with us, but I don't think we ever read much ; and although, as I have said, it never occurred to us to make any exertion to change our actual way of life, yet our talk on these occasions was always of the great changes to take place in the future. James had but little to say ; he always professed himself content to follow his father's profession. As for me, my career was at first undecided ; but as I grew older, it became understood between us, on the strength of the wretched verses in which I was wont to vent that yearning after happiness which the young so often mistake for an aspiration after higher things, that I was to be a great poet. Dick, tall, strong, handsome Dick, what could he be but a distinguished general, whose chief mission, as it presented itself to us in our day-dreams, appeared to be that of miraculously relieving besieged towns, scattering to the winds an enemy three times his superior in force, and saving the life and honour of some lovely and oppressed princess ?

But the short and rare delights of these excursions were almost too bitterly paid for by the contrast they afforded to the oppressive atmosphere that seemed to pervade X Court. How I envied Dick and James the return on foot ! At least they were longer in reaching home ; they could pull the hedgerows by the way and breathe the fresh air of liberty to the last. How dark and dismal everything looked when I got home ! how *erie* I felt as I stumbled up the unlighted staircase, and leaned upon my crutch while I fumbled for the key-hole. How ghostly the lofty hall looked as I entered it unwelcomed, lighted my own candle, and limped up the creaking stairs to old Withers for company. The kitchen had at least the fire-light to cheer me, though the old woman herself was generally asleep in her chair, and often very cross at being disturbed. But I always stayed there till I heard the two others return. Dick's cheery voice would have scared the most pertinacious ghosts, and my nervous and sickly fancies never troubled me while I was with him.

I cannot explain how it was that we always came straight home—how it happened that we never fell into vice. What saved us ? God knows we should have been little to blame had we sought any means of escape from such a desolate existence. Yet, neglected and abandoned to ourselves as we were, at an age when the mere tumult of the blood leads many a well-guarded youth astray, our lives were

as pure as the life of any maiden in England beneath her father's roof.
I can only attribute it to the force of habit.

CHAPTER III.

" We, poor unfledg'd,
Have never wing'd from view of the nest ; we know not
What air's from home
. but unto us it is
A cell of ignorance."—SHAKESPEARE.

TIME dragged on, however, even in X Court, and when Dick was nineteen, our schoolmaster, who had long before withdrawn him from the ordinary school-boy routine, and given him private lessons, wrote a letter to Mr. Prescott, in which he informed him that his eldest son was both too old and too well-informed for his establishment, and earnestly recommended that he should be sent to college. Dick accordingly left school, but my uncle appeared quite undecided what to do with him, and he was left to idle about the house or streets as he chose for two long years, during which he studied military works as well as he could alone. He repeatedly urged my uncle to buy him a commission, but never got more than an impatient *pish* in reply. James and I left school shortly after Dick, and James at once entered his father's office as a salaried clerk. During the period of enforced idleness that ensued upon his first leaving school, Dick had made a discovery which proved a source of great delight both to him and me.

One of the rooms at the top of the house had always been kept locked, and we boys had been very curious to know what it contained. Dick contrived to worm out of Mrs. Withers the secret that it contained his grandfather's library, which had been sent to Mrs. Prescott after her father's death. Mrs. Withers knew nothing of the key, but Dick burst open the door with a vigorous kick, and entered upon a field of enjoyment so new to him, as to make him for the time forget even his aspirations after a military career. His pleasure was equalled, perhaps surpassed, by mine. The books were of every description, from the best standard authors, down to a mass of French novels very unfit for any lad's reading ; but we devoured them all, and perhaps the antidotes were as powerful as the poisons among them. For a time we were transported into an unreal world of delight, which rendered us indifferent to the troubles of our actual everyday existence ; but when this resource was exhausted, that everyday existence became intolerable to us. We were eaten up with ennui, and even habit could no longer reconcile us to a life, the joyless uselessness of which we now fully understood.

One evening, after a good deal of gloomy talk over our position,

Dick had thrown himself upon the horse-hair sofa, on the arm of which he had been playing at horses when I first saw him, and fallen fast asleep. James came upstairs from the office and seated himself wearily at the table, leaning his head upon a hand begrimed with ink and dust. The contrast between the two brothers had never struck me so forcibly before. From the night when Mrs. Withers first compared him to a "blessed angel," the sense of Dick's personal comeliness had never left me; and as I looked at his bright golden hair, refined features, and strong yet elegant frame, I could not help exclaiming: "How unlike you two are!"

"Yes, indeed," said James, sadly, looking at the sleeper; "Dick is very handsome, and I am very ugly; I know that. But what does it matter? I am to be a lawyer, you know, and what would be the good of having such a figure as Dick, when I've got to sit all my life scribbling downstairs in the office?"

"But don't you like to be a lawyer, James?" said I.

"What does it matter whether I like it or not, when it's got to be?" answered he; "besides, I dare say I shall like it when I'm one of the firm, and earn money myself. Father says I shall."

He sighed, and as I looked at his pale, weary, patient face, I felt a sudden increase of sympathy for him.

"What's the good of slaving and striving for money which nobody spends?" said I. "What's the good of being rich and living here as we do? Look at Mr. Earle; old Withers says he is a great deal richer than uncle, and what good does his money do to him or to anybody else? Oh, James, why don't we all make an effort to get out of this dreadful house?"

James looked up at me surprised, for I spoke with a passion unaccountable to him.

"It is dull," he said, after a pause.

"Dull," cried I, "duller than the grave; day after day, night after night, always the same. Nothing to do, but to read books one knows by heart; nothing to see but this odious, melancholy court; no one to speak to but Withers who can't understand one, my uncle who never answers, and Mr. Earle who sneers at everything."

The energy with which I spoke had awakened Dick, and he had heard nearly all that we had said. He now joined in, saying: "It's all true; it's all true; let's run away; any life must be better than living here. I should have run away long ago if it had not been for leaving Ned, but you and I would take care of him."

"Do, James, do," cried I, too excited at the idea of liberty to remember my own helplessness.

James shook his head, sadly. "If you two want to run away—and I'm sure I don't wonder at it—I won't peach, and I'll give you all the money I've got to help your start; but it wouldn't do for me to leave father."

"Pooh!" said Dick; "who cares for father?"

"That's just it," said James, lowering his voice, "nobody cares for father. He says himself that if he don't soon have a son in the business to take his part, Uncle Earle will bully him out of it. Why, all the clerks see how Earle bullies him, and that he hasn't spirit to stand up against it. There must be somebody to stand up against Earle, and when once I'm a partner, he won't bully me."

Dick and I looked at one another in astonishment. We both saw James for the first time in a perfectly new light. He spoke very low, and in his usual cold and awkward manner; but somehow we both felt that, as he said, Mr. Earle would not bully him.

"Well," said Dick, after a pause, "perhaps you are right, but that has nothing to do with Ned and me. We are no use to anybody here, and so we'll run away to-morrow night."

But my excitement had subsided, and much as I longed for freedom, I could not but reflect, that though Dick might battle successfully with the world alone, even he could not make his way with a clog like me at his heels, and I said so. At first Dick protested against leaving me behind in that dungeon; but as James strongly agreed with me, it was at last settled between us that Dick was to run away on the following Sunday night, and go for a soldier or a sailor as the case might be; that he was to make his fortune—of this I think none of us entertained a shadow of doubt—and then return to fetch me to share his wealth and honours with him. James, in the meantime, was to become a partner, and achieve such success in business as would enable him to buy off Earle and free his father and himself from the incubus of his presence.

I cannot tell why we all so cordially hated Earle. James, it is true, had had reason since he had entered the office to dislike him, but I cannot remember that he had ever been really unkind to any of us lads; yet even Dick, for whom he had so frequently interfered to save when a child from his father's violence, disliked him far more than he did his oppressor. I had been instinctively repelled by Earle's appearance and supercilious, sneering manner, when I first saw him; and the impression had deepened rather than diminished with years. I am inclined to think children are generally in the right in such matters, and I own I am always indisposed towards a man from whom I observe children shrink away.

Now that James's unexpected confidence had called forth our own, Dick and I continued to speak freely to him of our hopes and plans for the future; and it was, I think, chiefly owing to his superior prudence, that Dick did not start that very night. God knows how often I have thought of this since, and wished he had!

James, however, persuaded us to postpone the execution of our project till the following Sunday. Our united stock of pocket money only amounted to five shillings and twopence; and even with our

exalted notions of Dick's capacity, this appeared a small sum to begin the world withal. On the Saturday night James would receive his week's salary, and a guinea would be an important addition to Dick's little store. It would have appeared quite natural to all of us that he should take James's money, had it been a hundred times as much. Was he not going to make his fortune for the happiness, glory, and benefit of us all?

No doubt most London lads of the present day would smile with superior pity at our limited notions; but it must be remembered that we had never had any opportunity of acquiring the expensive tastes upon which they doubtless pride themselves; that our knowledge of the world was limited to the little we had gained from the old squire's library, and that certainly none of the heroes in whom we had so rapturous and implicit a faith, could have presented a more gallant and heroic exterior than our poor Dick. Though little more than twenty-one, he looked far older; his frame, though elegant, was muscular; and notwithstanding his habitual gentleness of manner—possibly acquired from his long habit of protecting and assisting my infirmity—when roused he was full of fire and spirit. The thought of losing him was dreadful to me, but I struggled to conceal my unhappiness; I knew that a word of lamentation at my loneliness would suffice to make him give up all idea of leaving me; but I was so firmly convinced of the brilliant future in store for him, that I kept silence as a duty. It was long before I could compose myself to sleep—my dreams were full of wild adventures and impossible escapes, in which Dick was invariably the prominent figure; and I awoke before daybreak unrested, but unable to sleep again.

I arose at least an hour earlier than usual, leaving the unconscious hero of my nocturnal romances still asleep. Mrs. Withers was lighting the sitting-room fire when I went in, which was, I think, the utmost she ever did towards rendering the room habitable. Notwithstanding the tenacity with which she clung to the eternal broom, I have no recollection of ever seeing her dust or sweep. I know she tried occasionally to wipe the mantelpiece or the table with the apron that so frequently had dried our childish tears, but I do not remember that the furniture ever looked any the brighter for the performance of that little ceremony.

I seated myself listlessly on the rug, and began coaxing the fire into a blaze; during which occupation I fell into a daydream, from which I was roused by hearing the postman's knock. Presently, Mrs. Withers entered with the morning's letters. It was her custom to place my uncle's letters by the side of his teacup at one end of the table, and Mr. Earle's in a similar position at the other end. I had never taken any interest in the distribution of the letters. I knew well enough there could be none for me; but I did notice on this occasion a large foreign letter with a black seal, which she placed by

the side of my uncle's cup. I was about to look at the address when my attention was attracted by a noise in the court below, and I went to the window to see what was the matter. The windows of the sitting-room stood in deep recesses, with old-fashioned window seats : they were draped with heavy red curtains, and as I knelt on the corner of the window seat farthest from the door, I must have been completely hidden by the curtain from anyone entering the sitting-room. Certainly, Mr. Earle, who came in at that moment, could have had no idea of my presence, for he went to examine the bundle of letters placed by my uncle's cup, with the air of one performing a customary act, and even before he looked at his own. I saw him change colour at the sight of the letter with the black seal, hastily put it in his pocket, and leave the room.

I was confounded. It was evidently his intention to read his partner's letter and conceal its arrival. I determined at first that I would tell my uncle what I had seen : then certain cowardly misgivings as to the impolicy of making Mr. Earle my enemy, just when my champion and protector was about to leave the house, caused me to hesitate. I pondered uneasily upon the subject without coming to a decision, until my uncle and Mr. Earle both entered the room, and at the same moment Mrs. Withers brought in the breakfast.

My uncle and Mr. Earle seated themselves in their accustomed places, and began opening their letters as usual ; but I noticed that Earle's hand trembled so violently that he could scarcely raise his cup to his mouth, and that he was very pale. There was nothing, however, so striking in his agitation as to have attracted my attention had it not already been drawn towards him by what had passed ; and he was soon able to master his emotion, of whatever description it may have been.

My uncle—after glancing in a listless, indifferent manner at the few insignificant letters that lay by his cup—took up his newspaper, as usual. I had certainly no love for him. He had never shown me any tenderness : still he had never been unkind to me ; and my heart was softened towards him by the recollection of James's confidence of the night before. By a sudden resolution I took courage, and, leaving my station behind the curtain, I went up to my uncle and said—

"There was another letter for you, uncle ; a foreign letter !"

I did not dare to look at Mr. Earle ; but I knew that he started.

"A foreign letter, Ned !" said my uncle. "Where is it ?"

I felt Earle's eye upon me, and my courage failed ; so I pretended to look about on the table for the letter, saying—

"Yes, a foreign letter ; and it had a black seal."

"Oh !" said Mr. Earle, laughing ; "your zeal is more officious than correct, Ned. The letter with a black seal was directed to me, and old Withers placed it by your uncle's cup by mistake."

I was defeated, but not convinced ; and I fancied my uncle appeared

uneasy. He said nothing, however ; and took up his newspaper again with an angry frown.

"By the way, Prescott," said Mr. Earle, after a pause, "an old friend of mine has just died in Italy and has left his daughter to my care. The girl may arrive any day, for I fear she has already started. I must tell Withers," he added, ringing the bell, "to get my late sister's room ready."

"A girl !" said Prescott, angrily ; "she can't come here, Stephen. What in the world should we do with a girl in this hole ; an Italian, too ; very likely a Catholic ? Why, we should have the house full of prying priests ! And I won't have that room used," he added ; "it has been shut up, you know, ever since—— Really, Earle, I can't imagine how you can propose such an arrangement."

"The arrangement is none of my making," said his partner, coolly. "I know any girl would be a bore here, and I do not, certainly, intend her to stay. I shall write at once to prevent her coming at all, if possible ; but if she has already started, she will come straight here, and *must* therefore remain till I can make some fresh arrangement. As to the room," he continued, purposely mistaking my uncle's meaning, "it will do well enough when Withers has brushed it up a little. Why should not the girl be quite as happy there as my sister was ?"

This last question was asked with a sneering laugh. I could see that my uncle winced under it, and hear him mutter an oath between his teeth : but he took up his newspaper again, saying, "Of course, you will have your own way about it, as you do about everything else ; but I tell you, you must be mad to think about bringing a young girl here among all these lads, and——"

He stopped short as Dick and James came in to breakfast, followed by Mrs. Withers, looking especially surly at having been rung for out of the accustomed routine.

My uncle's last remark seemed to make some impression upon Mr. Earle, for he looked uneasily at Dick ; and then, turning to Mrs. Withers, said, "Nothing now, Betty, I'll come and speak to you presently, upstairs." Then assuming a jocular air, he said, still addressing Mrs. Withers, but I fancied, with a side glance at me, "I must buy you a new pair of spectacles, old lady ; you made a mistake this morning, and put one of my letters on Mr. Prescott's side of the table."

"Neither you nor me ain't so young as we was, Mr. Stephen," said the old woman. "I puts the letters according to who the postman says they're for ; and as to mistakes," she added, leaning upon her broom, and nodding her head with a defiant air, "there's many a mistake has been made amongst us, worse luck, and will be again, most like."

Hereupon she left the room, muttering discontentedly to herself, and Earle, suddenly turning to Dick, as if anxious to change the subject, said,

"Dick, my man, I have been thinking it's time you should be doing something. We must make a soldier of you now, you know. What think you of a commission in the —th Light Dragoons?"

The thing was so unexpected that, at first, Dick had not a word to say. A short pause ensued, during which I felt that Earle was looking at me, and I wondered whether he knew that I attributed this eagerness to despatch Dick, to the fact of the expected arrival of the Italian girl. At length Dick turned to my uncle and said,

"If you really mean this, father, I am very much obliged to you."

"I have nothing to do with it," said Mr. Prescott, coldly. "Your uncle Earle arranges everything in this house. Come, James," he added, pushing away his plate, and rising, "it is time for us to be in the office."

"Then I must thank you for this, uncle," said Dick, turning to Earle, who immediately engaged him in conversation as to his future prospects, and spoke to him of the necessity of his leaving home immediately, as if all the previous delays had been of the poor lad's own making. The whole thing seemed to me very strange. I had never seen Earle so amiable, nor heard him speak so lightly of money before. Ignorant as I was, I knew Dick could not obtain a commission in such a regiment for nothing.

I sat lost in thought, pondering over all these things, while Dick unsuspectingly conversed with his uncle Earle over the arrangements to be made for his departure from home.

Then my mind reverted to the letter. How I wished I had looked at the direction! Perhaps I was wrong in my suspicions. I would speak to Withers on the subject. But over all these ideas and determinations hung the image which I had conjured up in my own mind of Mr. Earle's mysterious ward. I had not a moment's doubt that she was very beautiful, with the lustrous black eyes and hair, and the pale olive skin which *il lungo studio e il grande amore* of Mrs. Radcliffe's works had taught me to regard as the distinguishing characteristic of Italian birth, and fixed in my mind as the invariable type of Italian beauty.

I was roused from my reflections by Mr. Earle, who rose from his seat, took up his bundle of letters, and said to me,

"Now that Dick's disposed of, we must look out for something for you, Ned."

He put his hand on my shoulder as he spoke, but I instinctively shrank away from his touch. He looked at me for a moment with a half-pitying, half-contemptuous smile; then turned on his heel and left the room. I heard him go upstairs and I knew he was going to tell Mrs. Withers to get my aunt's room ready for the expected guest.

No sooner was I alone with Dick, than I eagerly related to him the great news I had heard, expecting him to be as excited as I was at

the thoughts of the Italian beauty. But, alas! Dick was no longer the same; his head was full of his commission, the life in barracks, uniforms, glory, and, above all, that magical word, liberty. Already he seemed to feel himself his own master—a free man; and I could not make him share the excitement I felt at the idea of the possible arrival of Mr. Earle's foreign ward.

Finding him so insensible upon that subject, I went so far as to tell him of my suspicions about the letter with the black seal; but he was disposed to see everything *coulour de rose* that day, and to be in full charity even with Mr. Earle. He only laughed at me, and said that it was quite evident Mrs. Withers had made a mistake. But the more certain he appeared of the contrary, the more my own suspicions that Earle had deceived my uncle deepened; the arguments which failed to convince him, completely convinced me, and at the end of our discussion I believe I could have gone to the scaffold for the truth of what had been at first a mere uneasy suspicion.

Dick soon after went out to walk off his excitement, and I instantly betook myself to the kitchen to seek Mrs. Withers. She was not there, but I found her engaged in opening the shutters of my aunt's bed-room. I had never before seen the door of this room unlocked, and I entered it with a sensation of awe, which was rather increased than diminished by a certain musty smell, which told plainly of long neglect. When the shutters were unclosed, and the sunlight let in upon the sad-coloured curtains and bed-hangings, which were covered with cobwebs and dust, I ventured to say to Withers, who had taken no notice of my entrance,

"It seems rather gloomy for a young lady, don't it?"

"It seemed gloomy enough to *my* young lady twenty years ago," said she, "but it's good enough for any foreign miss likely to come amongst us, I should think. I've a good mind to take the squire down," she continued, looking up regretfully at a portrait which hung up over the mantel-piece; "he wouldn't have liked to see no stuck-up, foreign girls in Mary's room, he wouldn't."

The old woman took hold of the picture with the intention of taking it down; but, finding it too heavy for her, she shook her head, saying, "Never mind, it don't much matter; there's many a thing he wouldn't have liked goes on in this house, worse luck."

I looked with great interest at the squire's portrait, in which I could trace a strong resemblance to Dick, but, as in the portrait of his daughter, there was in it a certain look of haughty wilfulness, which I did not like.

"I think Dick's is a far pleasanter face than this, Mrs. Withers," said I.

"Ah, poor Dick," said she, "he'll never do no harm to nobody but hisself, he won't. So they're going to get rid of him now, and he thinks it's a mighty fine thing to go for a soldier, he does, and per-

haps he's right enough, for there ain't nobody to cry after him when he's shot, worse luck."

Seeing that Mrs. Withers appeared to me more irritable, and, therefore, more talkative than usual, I determined to hazard a question about the letter, and said,

"How came you to make such a mistake with Mr. Earle's letter, Withers?"

"If nobody never made no worser mistakes than that," said the old woman, turning sharply round on me with suspended broom, "there's some folks as would be better off, there is,—there!"

This sibylline utterance was all I could extract from her on the subject. She went on slowly wiping the dingy furniture with the dingier apron, and all my often-repeated questions obtained no other reply than, "There, there! don't bother, lad, don't bother; can't you see I'm bothered enough already!"

(*To be continued.*)

LOVE'S QUEST.

(FOR A MURAL PAINTING.)

WHENAS the watches of the night had grown
 To that deep loneliness where dreams begin,
 I saw how Love, with visage worn and thin,
 With wings close-bound, went through a town alone.
 Death-pale he showed, and inly seemed to moan
 With sore desire some dolorous place to win;
 Sharp brambles passed had streaked his dazzling skin,
 His bright feet eke were gashed with many a stone.

And, as he went, I, sad for piteousness,
 Might see how men from door and gate would move
 To stay his steps; or womankind would press,
 With wistful eyes, to balconies above,
 And bid him enter in. But Love not less,
 Mournful, kept on his way. Ah, hapless Love!

AUSTIN DOBSON.

A FOG ON THE THAMES.

JUST now a growing fog has gathered on the river ; not thick enough—at any rate, as yet—to stop the traffic, but giving so weird a look to everything which it invests as to be worth a note or two.

It is a June, not a November, fog. The subtropical plants in Battersea Park seem quite at home in the sultry haze ; but the lilacs and the laburnums and the hawthorns and the chestnuts, white and red, and the ribbon flower-borders look strangely dim, while again the rich, moist grass, seen close at hand, shines as if giving off its own light. A stray park-keeper with dimmed gilt band and buttons, one or two solitaires dreaming on the clammy garden-seats, a stray gardener who looks up from his work and silently gazes at a passer-by with cowl-like eyes, a lounging waiter yawning in the midst of a jumble of empty benches and tables, and two or three little children dodging in and out between them like mice, are the only people one meets in the whole of the damp, gauze-muffled park. Leaden and smooth and indistinct, with blurred-green reflections, spreads the ornamental water, like a lagoon in which yellow fever and a Cuban alaver might be hiding. A water-fowl rises with a scurry of wings to alight unseen with a dully audible splash. Two black swans glide about noiselessly, or talking to each other in the voice which is said to be excellent in woman, twisting their long necks to crop the blades of the flowering flags, or lifting their red beaks to the leaves of the overhanging trees.

The lazy ripple of the river on the pebbly strand at the foot of the water-side of the park—so trim in its core, so rough at its edges—suggests a trip upon the water. Let us take boat at the pier hard by.

Old Chelsea Church and the old trees and houses of Cheyne Walk have a *Fata Morgana* look. Two white waker-boats, pulled by white-clad spectres, dart out of the mist ahead, and dart into the mist astern—emblems reversed of life. A train thunders over the railway-bridge, adding a coil of sluggishly curling snowy vapour to the mouse-coloured mist. A black lighter—one long sweep sprawling like a broken fin, the other tugged at, doggedly though seemingly lazily, by the lighterman, whose sulky features are indistinguishable—flounders past like a wounded whale. Tiers of black lighters, as gloomy as if they were meant for Titans' floating hearses, loom alongside the shore's blurred higgledy-piggledy of piles and wharfs and cranes, and "travellers" on gaunt timber skeletons, and coal, and brick and stone, and chimney-pots and drain-pipes. At Nine Elms there is a

maze of curving and crossing rails that look like half-obliterated fork-scratches on a greasy plate, with stumbling horses straining at lead-coloured and mud-coloured trucks, and men—clad presumably in green corduroy, but looking exactly like chimney-sweeps—shouting huskily to the horses and one another under the supervision of mist-magnified overseers, also leaden-hued. The extinguisher turrets of Millbank Penitentiary perk up, blurred, above the blurred jumble of its dirty-drab brick: the mist gives the place a Bastille look of mystery. The Lambeth Embankment glimpses through the murky air like a long line of pale ghosts drawn up along the banks of Styx; it is just possible to make out that builders are somewhere at work in the dark jumble of towered masonry formed by Lambeth Palace and Church. As we zigzag from side to side, the mist-bordered reaches of the river look like wide lakes. We run in so close to the Houses of Parliament that, in spite of the mist, we can see the scaled-off look of the stones of that magnificent modern-antique ready-made: to one who has crossed the line, the noses of some of the sculptured figures suggest a memory of the time when the skin peeled off his nose in curly shavings, though from a very different cause. Red and white St. Thomas's Hospital on the other side might serve for a dyspeptically despondent butcher's dream of vanishing raw beef.

When, under graceful Westminster Bridge, the funnel comes down, like a hemlock-stalk half cut in two by stick of idle wanderer practising sword-exercise—most ungenerously making use of its monopolised privilege to smoke abaft itself, by clogging our nostrils and defiling our shirt-fronts with unconsumed carbon—the fog is thickening so that we begin to doubt whether our boat will get beyond Hungerford; but, just as we have passed Hungerford Bridge,

Apollo's arrow flashes through the murk,
And flashes back in shattered gold.

The sudden sunbeam gleams but for a few moments, but it has turned the Embankment granite and Somerset House and Waterloo Bridge into shimmering snow, the Embankment Gardens into glistening emerald; it has lit up church vanes and windows in dusty brick houses, glorified straw-laden barges, even grimy coal-barges—and then it vanishes as suddenly as it came.

As we flap the brown waters into dingy cream on our way to our City wharf, we pass bilious-looking blotches of artificial light in Temple chambers and riverside warehouses: fog in her sober drab livery hath once more all things clad, when our skipper sidles his boat like a shying horse up to the Allhallows Pier.

Through rat-run passages, blocked with barrels and bricklayers, let us make a rush to London Bridge Wharf, and get on board a boat bound down the river.

Some of her passengers are already, so far as mental discernment goes, in keeping with the atmosphere. The proneness of British holiday-makers to get "foggy," with other than aqueous fumes, is a great mystery. They begin to muddle themselves before they start; they keep on muddling themselves whilst they are out, and so do not really see the things which it may be supposed they went forth for to see. They often get so quarrelsome, too, over their "enjoyment." Two of our fellow-passengers, before the moorings are cast off, have already got up their "little difference." They are in joint charge of their party of womankind and children, and one of them wants to be sole acting paymaster, promising to square accounts with his friend when they get ashore again. The other, however, in his own phrase, does not "see that." Perhaps he distrusts his companion's honour,—at any rate, arithmetic. It is plain, at least, that he does not relish the idea of losing such transitory respect as he might get from the stewards by the giving of orders and the disbursement of cash,—of playing in their eyes the part of Beneficiaire to his friend's Mr. Bountiful.

"Tain't as if you was goin' to stand Sam," he remarks, in a solemnly aggrieved tone. "I pays my whack, and I'll see to the orderin' on it."

The steam-boat's crew, who, especially the stewardkins, give themselves the airs of ancient mariners, because they sometimes go as far as Sheerness, laugh at the idea of any fog being found "down the river."

It lasts, however, some way down. Off Billingsgate Market, whose red bricks blotch the thick air like a "teething-rash," we pass three plump bowed and (may I say?) buttocked Dutch boats, anchored abreast, varnished, apparently, with "golden syrup," hanging out fish on their rigging (although, the fog considered, the figure is scarcely appropriate) like the drying frocks and trousers of men-of-war's men, and manned by stolid mariners who loom through the mist like stage-smugglers. Plenty of business, no doubt, is being transacted in the grim Custom House, but its lighters, rocking in the steam-boat's wash, make one think of sleepers tossing in a nightmare,—the abnormal darkness is so sleep-suggestive. The lofty Shad Thames warehouses loom unsubstantial as mouldy gingerbread. The Tower looks much as usual: to a "fanciful mind" *that* always has a haze about it,—an historical haze. Lots of steamers we pass, razor-bowed and apple-bowed, down by the head and down by the stern, with lists to port and with lists to starboard, bowspritless and with little stumps of bowsprits like rather big rolling-pins, with white, black, white and black, and red and black, and piecrust-coloured funnels—single or a brace of them; steamers with white paddle-boxes, and white and gilt and red and blue and yellow and green scrolls and mouldings, and raking scraped spars and "flemished" ropes

—sea-beauties, in spite of their bulging paddle-boxes and ugly screw-gaps astern ; and hideous screw colliers, as filthy and slovenly as the hardest-worked, worst-paid slavery, with squat funnels, like barge-chimneys, sticking up close by the mizen-mast ; steamers crammed with passengers, and sending the bray of brass or the twang of stringed music through the mist ; steamers languidly paddling or screwing their way to their berths, with a few sea-weary people looking over the side ; steamers, with chaotic decks, in the midst of a mob of lighters and wherries ; steamers that do not seem to have even a dog on board ; and consequentially snorting little tugs towing trains of barges, with the bargemen and their wives and children clustered about the long tillers. It is like unrolling a long scroll of “panorama”-coloured prints : scarcely any boat is seen in its entirety ; the stern of one and the stem of another are married by the mist. A Thames police galley rows past us. The pullers have a frank, sailor-like look, in spite of the prim letters which show their function ; nevertheless, shooting past in the fog, they make one think of Fehmgericht messengers. The masts and yards of the shipping in the docks, seen piecemeal, seem to be floating in the tawny air. The coal-whippers in yonder battered collier look like fiendish phantoms dancing above a bottomless pit, as they swing upon their ropes. The brown sails and trusses of the hay-barges are only distinguishable from the atmosphere as a sepia smudge is from a sepia drawing. The red sheathing of the *Fisgard* and the *Warspite* looks like dying embers. The grey and black of Greenwich Hospital, off which the *Fisgard*, removed from Woolwich, is now moored, can scarcely be made out through the gloom. The men looking over the side of the ship are like a smash of plums. The ship in front of the school is invisible. There is a little more light in the air when we pass Charlton. One of the *Warspite* boys can be seen almost distinctly, standing like a sucking Nelson or Captain Cook—a little chap whose face it is a pleasure to look at—with his foot on the cat-head,—a miniature man-of-war’s man, who seems to sympathise with Admiral Rous’s contempt for the “kettle,” as our representative of it—crack saloon-boat though she be—churns her swift way past him. The light is getting still stronger. The flabby cabbage-like green of that anchored ship can be seen far more plainly than we could make out the dull red of the floating powder-magazine we passed some time ago. “A stern chase is a long chase,” remarks, with most intensely nautical know-ingness, a fellow-passenger (who looks as if he had never been afloat before) as we shoot past a fussy screw, that is sending the water flying as if she were trundling a steam mop. “Something the matter with her engines,” he informs his friend. “Ah, that old *Warspite* ! They’ll never send her to sea again, I suppose ; but, take my word for it, she’d stand a deal more knocking about than your newfangled ships, for all their armour plates. She looks like a

man-of-war, she do. Yes ; two pint bottles of stout," he adds, to the peripatetic steward-tout, "and we'll drink to the naval glories of old England ; for Britons never, never, never shall be slaves." The band-collector comes round with his decanter-slide, and our nautical fellow-passenger, in his character of generous "never, never, never," etc., rattles all his loose (copper) change into it. Then he rushes off and speaks to the grinning master of the boat. "You don't know nothing about that ship with her tawgallon—somethin' or other—sent down. But I'll tell you," he good-naturedly assures his friend, when he comes back. "She's goin' out for seals—that's what she is. Ah, they don't send shrimps o' ships to Australia, like that, now-a-days." The last remark, apparently, is made *à propos* of nothing,—unless it be of a battered Sunderland brigantine that has lost her mizen topmast.

The sunlight again makes a startling appearance. A ship that has really been to Australia—long, low, clipper-bowed, lofty-masted, but with the old-fashioned black on white along her sides—is slowly coming up the river with peaked yards, and men, longing for a run on shore, chanting—

"And when we arrive at the London Docks,
Where the pretty (?) little girls come down in flocks," etc.,

in tow of one tug, with another on her starboard bow, helping the anxious pilot and the mate, who has taken the wheel, to round the windings of the reaches.

And then there is full daylight once more—a jumble of un-picturesque brick and mortar and smoke, and a sparkling river, bearing a host of anchored craft—amongst them a flotilla of yachts, schooners, cutters, yawls—two of them dressed in flags from truck to taff-rail ; and a magnificent two-funnelled British-built, foreign-owned steamer, to which a boat's crew of dusky-faced, red-fezzed, grinning foreign sailors are pulling with oars that keep stroke like a dropped sheaf of spillikins.

CHARLES CAMDEN.

THE LAY OF THE OLD PAUPER.

I'LL be eighty, come December,
And for more nor twenty year—
It's 'most too long to remember—
I've been a hinmate here.

When I got the rheumatics so bad,
Says Squire Brown to me :—
“ You ain't good for nought, my lad ;
Go into the House,” says he.

“ We lives in a Chrissen country,
And none don't need for to starve,
There's wittles for all and sundry,
And folks gets what they desurve.”

So I cum'd in this belief—
My God, what a life I've led !—
If this is hindoor relief,
I'd sooner be houtdoor dead.

I knows—why, in course I does,
I've larnt a bit in my time—
That poverty's reckoned wuss
Nor the most owdacious crime.

I hadn't no right to be born—
That warn't for the likes o' me—
And so they treats me with scorn ;
But it warn't my fault, d'ye see ?

They hate me because I'm tough,
And 'cause I increase the rate ;
But I was rated enough
When I worked on the Squire's estate.

The Master flies in a rage
Whenever I meets his eye :—
“ John Jones, why, wot's your age,
Don't you never mean for to die ?”

The Parson gives I a rap :—

“ You’re sulky, John Jones,” says he ;

“ There’s many a hungry chap

Ain’t so well off as ye.”

Then he sniffs and snuffs at my “ toke ” :—

“ Such richness is almost waste ;

It’s enough to make ye choke ”—

But he takes care not to taste.

I don’t behaye as I ought,

I warn’t never sent to school,

And I can’t be thankful for nought,

I’m such a poor old fool ;

But I thinks, when they screws me down,

To bury me with the “ grows,”

They’ll say, “ There’s some in the town

As is wusser nor old John Jones !”

A. EUBULE-EVANS.

A HIMALAYAN COURTSHIP.

'*Rám, Rám!*' said Coolie No. 1 ; "*Rám, Rám!*" echoed Coolie No. 2, while several native servants leisurely advancing from their houses to meet the new arrivals took up the salutation, and exchanged *Rám, Rám*, with the half-naked host who, carrying luggage, came toiling up the steep rough pathway leading to the tea-planter's bungalow. In five minutes the luggage was popped down and the coolies were squatting, each one close to his burthen, huddled together, coughing and choking over the pungent mixture of bad tobacco and opium, which filled the "hubble bubble" that was passed round amongst them. In five minutes more the servants, who had squatted themselves before them, had learnt the news of the speedy advent of the young lady traveller, who, in her dandy, was not very far behind, and in another five minutes' time the young lady traveller was borne upwards and let out of her hammock-like conveyance close to the rambling verandahed house that was to be her future home. All through the long journey from her English school, on shipboard, in the train, in the *Dák-Gáree*, in the doolie, in the burning heat of the plains, during the wearisome toiling up and down the mountains, and amidst the fever-stricken valleys, she had cheered herself out of her girlish nervousness by thinking of her journey's end—of the welcome that would then be hers, of the unknown Aunt and Uncle and young man Cousin who were her nearest relations, and at whose command she had, on completing her education, come so far to be, as she fondly hoped, "unto them as a daughter" and sister. All the sorrow of parting with her schoolfellows and the few friends she had in England, all the forlorn feelings she had experienced when she was passed on through India from one strange hand to another, all her terrors during nights spent in solitary *dák* bungalows amongst the Himalayas ; all these sufferings were to be more than compensated for when at last she should reach "*Bahutburrakhud*." And now here she was safe and sound on the mountain height, nine thousand feet above the level of the sea—here was the home—but the welcome—where was that ? Looking at the house it appeared deserted ; its wide verandah, half filled with old packing-cases piled up here and there without order or attempt at order, appeared not to have been swept for long ; the glass doors were unpainted and patched with newspaper, and closely shut and curtainless ; the plateau on which it stood seemed never to have been touched since it was dug and delved for the buildings, for heaps of refuse soil, and roughly hewn stone and moss-covered wood, and rusty iron, lay

around ; man's handiwork was visible enough, but it was not the hand of kindness, and as the new comer stood forlornly looking and listening for the kind faces and voices she had yearned for, the untidiness and gloom of the place chilled and depressed her almost to despair. The coolies sat impassively staring at her, thinking, if indeed they were capable of thought, of the possible amount of pice to be extracted from the unprotected Missy Baba. The servants had vanished immediately they caught sight of the dandy, to don something more presentable to European eyes than the brown blankets which were all the clothing they considered necessary when off duty, and the girl stood drooping and despairing and wondering what she should do.

Presently from out of the kennel-like servants' huts to the right of the house, a decently attired man came towards her, and with profound salaams addressed her ; but alas ! he only spoke his native tongue, and the young lady had not yet mastered more of Hindustanee than to ask for water. Domestic servants in India are, however, very ingenious in making themselves understood to a certain extent, and he contrived by signs to tell her no one was at home, but how long the family would remain away, nor what she was to do till they returned, were matters beyond his skill to communicate.

Having bewildered each other completely by vain attempts to overcome the impossibility of going into particulars, the man opened a door and ushered her into the house, the rooms of which struck her as more like oellar kitchens than sitting-rooms, and then a bright idea struck him, and exclaiming "Jān-jān, Cheeniman," he abruptly left her.

The girl threw down the wraps she had brought in her dandy, and took a survey of the apartment ; the broken stone floor was only partially covered by leopard and bear skins, and the badly joined slabs of all shapes and sizes would not have done credit to the floor of an English pig-sty ; a wide grateless fire-place with the remains of a wood fire on its blackened hearth, was the only break in one yellow washed wall, and the few chairs and tables were of the commonest and ugliest kind ; no picture redeemed the blank hideousness of the unevenly plastered walls, no signs of a woman's presence softened the bare neglected room, and above all a torn ceiling-cloth discoloured by damp hung down and bulged out, disclosing the uncut rafters of the roof. Ornament of any kind there was none, unless two bottles containing horrid-looking snakes preserved in spirits, which stood on the high plaster chimney-piece, could be termed ornamental. Faded curtains hung before the doors that communicated with other rooms : it was difficult to say which were the shabbiest, the warped, unpainted, badly-fitted doors, or the curtains that hid the doors. A brief glance into the inner rooms—just as bare and damp

and dark as the first, was sufficient, and with a shudder the girl quickly returned to the outside of the house to seek comfort in the sunshine.

What a view was before her! Height beyond height, depth beyond depth, softly swelling green hills opening into numberless valleys, the sides of which were covered with the delicate blush-like tint of the lovely geranium tree, the deeper pink of the sweet wild rose, and the pure white stars of the jessamine; each height differently shaped and differently shaded: some violet, some pale gray, some vivid green, mute emotionless guardians of an, until very lately, unknown region, all still and impassive whether storm raged or sun glowed over them, seeing generation after generation of man and beast die out century after century, while they in their undecaying grandeur stand firm and changeless. And depths so darkly purple, so wildly beautiful, full of the music of falling water, and rich with the wealth of exquisite ferns and mosses. But height and depth, each with their peculiar bloom and loveliness, were but secondary to the great charm of the unrivalled scene, for above all—the base draped in the morning haze—towered far up in the wonderfully deep-blue sky a line of glittering pinnacles the snowy range of the Himalayas! Hidden as was the base by the morning mist, these wondrous summits appeared as if literally in another world. White and sparkling, and sharply defined in mid air, they caught and chained the eyes and drew the thoughts from earth and matter of fact, and set the brain teeming with romance and fancy. Only in the early morning do they appear so brilliantly pure, so glitteringly sharp and hard and spotless; but rarely beautiful as they are at this hour, it is a beauty that awes and chills, like the beauty of death, whereas in the sunset hour they glow with the radiance of warm tinted gems, and with their gleaming roseate brows appear as an enchanted land, or as we picture the heavenly country will appear as we journey over the river of death towards it.

Frances Day stood long contemplating the scene, and listening to the unseen river that brawled over and between the rocks in the valley far below. But the picture and the sound did not raise her spirits. So many days had she been looking on like glories and listening to like music, that the charm of novelty was now wanting, and the vastness and solitude and utter absence of habitation and cultivation on the great hill-sides, made her weary for friendly faces and voices, and rendered her incapable of being satisfied with nature only.

To her Death reigned on those sublime snow mountains, and desolation in these blooming valleys. At the age of eighteen young ladies are seldom properly appreciative of the charms of scenery, though they are all educated to rave about it, and Frances Day was tired and hungry and terribly disappointed; how could she satisfy

herself with a fine view, and console herself with mere beauty of outline?

"What *am* I to do?" she cried in despair; and then faint and vexed she sank down on a block of stone and gazed angrily around her.

What an atom she was in those vast solitudes. All things in earth and heaven were regardless of her. The great eagles and vultures lazily floating in the languid air, the troop of red monkeys wildly careering on an opposite slope, the impudent crows sidling to the verandah and making darts at some bits of biscuit that had fallen from her bag, the lizards playing at her very feet, the softly waving pampas-grass swaying gracefully in the faint breeze and gleaming like unspun silk, the sweet geraniums and roses and the brawling stream, all were at home and at ease, while she returned to the home of her birth, to the home of her nearest relations, to find herself as an outcast and a stranger.

"I can't even make them understand I'm hungry!" she cried again, as if appealing to this cruel nature around her. "What shall I do when it is dark! what shall I do when I have to go into that horrible room for the night!"

This was all very unlike the conduct of a heroine; but Frances was only heroic when she was in perfect comfort and safety, and she was fast nearing that point where a good fit of weeping is inevitable, when her attention was diverted by the return of the servant, accompanied by "Jān Cheenimān." There was no mistaking the nationality of the latter; his small eyes, flat nose, and wide thin-lipped mouth, as much as his pigtail, full-sleeved robe and turned-up shoes, revealed his celestial origin. John Chinaman, manager of the Tea-garden, had been fetched by the Khidmutgar as the one English-speaking person on the premises.

"I speak English," John began, smiling benignantly on the girl, and bending towards her patronisingly. "Missy be contenty, I speak to her till Master come back, one, two, three, four days, weeks, months, Master come back, Missy be contenty; I give her plenty tea, I tell servants everything for Missy; Missy may speak what she want. I takey care."

Then he stood silently smiling, awaiting her speech.

"Didn't they expect me?—when will they come?—where are they?—what am I to do?" she vehemently exclaimed, till seeing she had perfectly overwhelmed her friend by her vehemence, she began again slowly,—

"Did—they—not—expect—me?"

Jān and the Khidmutgar then exchanged sentences, and Jān answered,—

"He say yes, Missy only come too soon, all right; yes, all right."

"When will they come back?" Frances continued.

"This day—that day, sure to come, I send coolie bring them; all serene, Missy be contenty."

She shook her head; how could she draw content from this very insufficient explanation?

The Khidmutgar was the best comforter, after all; he spoke to John again, and John interpreted that food and drink should be ready quickly if she pleased. Of course she pleased, and then she had the horror of witnessing her dinner chased and killed, and plunged into a bowl of boiling water, from which the poor little half-starved fowl emerged, completely despoiled of his feathers, and while still warm with life, was trussed and broiled, and served up in an incredibly short time. But not even extreme hunger could make her eat; she drank the tea, and that revived her, and then she returned to the block of stone and sat idly looking at the mountains till the shadows climbed nearly to their summits. Starting from her seat at last, she set off with the intention of surveying the place from the height beyond, but she had not proceeded many yards up the narrow path that led through the thick brushwood and oak trees, when the servant, "Muddea," overtook her and addressed her eagerly and persuasively. He was, in fact, afraid to let her out of sight, especially was he afraid to let her go through the thick underwood, it being the haunt, not only of snakes and leopards, but occasionally of tigers also. But this he could not make her understand. She turned at his voice, and stood wondering at his gestures and volubility. Politeness made her stop and do her utmost to guess his meaning; but after a time, she took no further trouble, and vexed at the interruption, she would have pursued her way, but Muddea was undaunted. He could not touch her—a native cannot forget himself so far,—yet he dare not let her go on, when she was in a manner under his sole charge. So he jumped ahead of her, and shaking his head at the cover towards which she would go, he raised his hand to denote the height, then did his best to imitate the roaring of a wild animal. She thought he had gone mad, and wondered whether, if she screamed, anyone would come to her assistance. Oh, what a terrible fate was hers to travel so far to find an empty house with only a lunatic to depend upon! Perhaps he was not mad, now she thought; perhaps he was commencing another mutiny, and history would name her as the first victim. Trembling and white, she stood staring at the man, who, thinking his warning had taken effect, stopped his howling, and smiled and nodded reassuringly, waving his hand back in the direction of the house; but before she made up her mind whether to be murdered out of doors or in that dreary bungalow, a loud, shrill whistle suddenly drew her attention. Walking with long rapid strides up the staircase-like pathway, appeared a young Englishman, grotesquely attired in the shabbiest of badly-

made and ill-fitting clothes ; he was plain and undersized, and his complexion, though tanned, was sallow and unhealthy. Round his unbrushed head was wound a gray scarf, one end of which hung far over his back. Into an undressed hide belt were stuck a pistol, a large clasp knife, a pipe case, and a small telescope ; three natives followed close, one carried a gun and ammunition, another a large white umbrella and a long iron-spiked stick, and the third a basket of provisions ; following these again, was a stout short Bhootia pony, and a small army of coolies bringing bedding, tent, and stores, and last of all, came some half-naked villagers who had been pressed into the service, bearing a dead deer, whose graceful head and tapered horns grazed the ground as he was ignominiously borne onward legs uppermost ; some partridges and hill pheasants also swelled the young man's spoil. The exquisite plumage of the Moonāl gleaming amongst the more sober birds, caught Miss Day's eyes as the procession came to a stand in the compound. She guessed the new comer to be her cousin, and in an instant all her doubts and dread disappeared, for though he was by no means prepossessing according to school-girl ideas of a gentleman, yet he was of her own blood, and she was no longer desolate.

"So you've come?" he cried, going up to his cousin, but not offering his hand, and his cheeks colouring like a bashful girl's. "I heard of you from some coolies who passed you day before yesterday. I've sent to tell mother, she's only three marches off, and father will turn up some day, but I came on sharp, and brought something to eat ; there's never anything fit to eat here, unless I kill it."

"I'm so glad you've come," she answered ; and not noticing his remissness, she held out her hand for his. He grew crimson, hesitated for a second, and then thrust his hand into hers with an air of desperation ; it was the first time in his life he had shaken a lady's hand.

He looked round him afterwards defiantly, as if he expected to see derision on his servants' faces, and was prepared to resent it. Frances guessed nothing : had he come on the scene as she had expected, awaiting her arrival and eager to receive her, she would have been quizzical and distant as most girls would be with such an uncouth young man ; but he had appeared in her sore distress, and would have been welcome had he been ten times queerer ; as it was, therefore, she accepted him unquestioningly, and could see no flaw in him.

"It will soon be dark," she said, "and I haven't unpacked anything. I didn't like to go into the house, it is so—" she stopped suddenly. He went on with her speech :

"So miserable, I suppose you mean.—Well you can't expect London drawing-rooms up here ; but when mother is at home, it looks better, she sticks things over the chairs, and pulls out bits of

crookery and all that." As he spoke he was looking at her keenly, and when he ended his words, his eyes continued their scrutiny.

"Well?" she said, laughing, "what is amiss, do I look so untidy?"

"No," he said, gravely; "I'm thinking you are too fine a lady to live up here."

Now she had been intending to open a box and take out a certain very pretty blue gown that very evening, out of compliment to her cousin, but his grave manner alarmed her.

"This is my old travelling dress," she answered, meekly; "I was ashamed of keeping it on all day, now that I have reached home."

"You are too fine for us," he replied; "wait till you see mother."

However, Frances attempted no further adornment that evening; indeed, the sight of the dark, dilapidated room which her cousin pointed out as hers, depressed her too much to permit her to remain in it long enough. He came in and arranged her boxes.

"Don't push them nearer the wall," he said; "musk rats don't smell nice to some folks, though I always keep a skin of one in my handkerchief. I like the scent, and if they once go over anything, you never get rid of the smell. They must keep to the side of the room, so if you keep clear of the walls, you're all right. Ah, you mustn't hang that on the walls; don't you know scorpions are always about? Pull your bed further out—and you'd best shut that window, snakes might get in there, and it's quick work if one finds you off guard."

She looked horrified.

"Do snakes come inside?" she asked.

He laughed. "Don't they, that's all;—did you notice those pickled ones in the other room? Mother smashed their heads; she found one coiled round the leg of her bed, and the other under father's pillow."

A good night's rest which Miss Day had in spite of her fears made all around her appear in a much more favourable light next day, and as there was every probability of her aunt's return she was hopeful and lively again. The blue dress was worn, and John Day's eyes hardly left his fair companion during breakfast; at last his thoughts found vent in words.

"What's the use of decking yourself out like that?"

"Like what?"

"Why, all those furbelow things; there's no tomasha going on—you'd better put on something sensible."

"Tomasha?"

"Yes—why you don't mean to say you don't know what a tomasha is—perhaps you don't know what a burra din is, then?"

"No, I don't."

The young man stared. "I thought any Yahoo knew that," he said, contemptuously.

"Yes, but then I'm not a Yahoo," she answered, guessing the meaning of the word by the contempt in his tones.

He burst out laughing. "That's sharp," he cried. "Well, I'm glad you've come, and I'm glad you dress up like that: mother never has new clothes; but you'll never like living here all your life."

All her life! She looked grave, and yet this must be her home until the knight of her school-girl dreams came to take her out into the busy brilliant world.

"No," she replied; "but that's not likely."

"Isn't it? why, your money is in this business and,—come, I'll tell you something, for you are not very missish and won't be huffed. Father and mother think you and I might marry and keep our money together. But, you needn't fire up,—I see I shouldn't suit you, and you are too grand for me."

Frances's face was painfully burning. She remained silent some time, growing hotter and hotter,—then she looked her cousin boldly in the face. "You've spoken out," she said, "so I'll tell you something that I did not mean to tell anyone yet. I have promised to marry someone who came out in the same ship with me."

"I'm blown!" he cried, pushing his chair back and sticking both hands in his hair in intense amazement. "What, a baby like you already promised!"

"I beg your pardon. You forget. I'm eighteen," she exclaimed, angrily.

"And who is it?" he continued, treating the matter as a good joke, while at the same moment he suddenly felt an intense desire to cut the favoured suitor out.

"You'll know in time," she replied, with dignity.

"How long a time?"

"When he gets his company."

"What, is he only a subaltern?—pooh!"

Frances got up and walked out of the room.

John Day remained silently gazing after her; at last he got up and went off to the servants' quarters, where he soothed himself by giving his groom a horsewhipping for neglecting some work.

It was a glorious day, the sky was of deepest cloudless blue, the lofty range of snow mountains stood up against it distinctly white as if only ten instead of forty miles lay between them and Bahut-burrakhud. The glowing beauty of earth and sky soon restored Frances's equanimity, and after luncheon she made friendly overtures to her cousin, which were graciously accepted. He took her to the tea-gardens, and showed her acre on acre of tea shrubs almost ready for picking, and explained to her the different processes. He spoke well because he understood the subject. Shooting and tea-growing were the two matters on which he could talk fluently, on all other things he was stupid and ignorant. Of the world of art and

science, of polite literature and modern progress, he knew nothing ; his twenty-four years had been spent in these mountain solitudes, and he had never even seen a railway or steam-boat. Calcutta and London held about an equal distance in his hazy ideas of geography, and the greatest person he had ever seen was the Commissioner of the Province, of whom he was accustomed to speak as of a king. Among the tea-gardens, therefore, John Day showed to advantage, and the afternoon passed quickly and pleasantly enough. As the cousins returned towards home, John suddenly seized his companion's arm and pointed below with a whispered exclamation.

For an instant she saw nothing but the mountain side, intersected just below them by the rugged narrow road, but as her eyes went further she beheld what made her turn deadly pale and inclined her to run to the bungalow, therein to barricade herself. Not fifty yards beyond the road, amongst boulders of rock and bushes of tall silvery pampas, stood a large tiger ; his head was turned away, and his ears being cocked and his tail gently waving showed him to be eyeing some intended prey. John's grasp tightened on her arm and kept her still ; he was keenly excited. "Listen," he whispered ; "climb up the hill to the house quick as you can and bring me my rifle ; it is ready loaded." But just as she was beginning to protest she would rather face a tiger than touch a loaded rifle, a quick sharp report was heard, and the huge beautiful beast gave a great bound, and then stood for an instant, with head well up and dilated nostrils, till another shot rang fiercely through the silent air and laid him low.

John watched with bated breath, and Frances shut her eyes and began to cry ; the beast shook the bushes amongst which it lay, but it never rose again. A third ball came whizzing into its side, and then three or four natives cautiously approached the place. John scrambled down the boulders, crying to the men to keep off, and left thus to herself, Frances took to her heels and flew for safety to the bungalow.

Standing in the verandah ready to fly inside, she presently beheld another arrival,—a little gentleman—an elderly likeness of John Day—who came marching up the path, followed by his pony and servants, the procession altogether similar to that which had followed the young man, only that the main figure affected the military style and wore a forage cap and a long military cloak.

Frances could have fancied it was John again. It was the new comer who had killed the tiger, evidently, for the man behind him carried a rifle.

Coming close to the house the gentleman grew rosy and nervous, and Frances attentively regarding him saw with amazement that his hair was braided like a woman's, and that his face and manner were extremely effeminate ; in fact, a lengthened scrutiny convinced her it

was a woman not a man who approached. The voice was unmistakable.

"My dear niece," it said, "I am your Aunt Louisa."

Just as John had hesitated, so did Mrs. Day hesitate to shake hands when Frances held hers out.

Here was a woman who had just killed a tiger, who feared not to travel alone in these awful solitudes, and whose dress consisted of old military clothes belonging to her husband, yet abashed and nervous in face of a young English girl. A tiger was a less formidable creature to her than a strange Englishwoman, and yet she had once been a dainty county belle.

"Did you?" Frances stammered in dismay; "did you fire that gun just now?"

Mrs. Day blushed deeper.

"I never had a chance at a tiger before," she replied; "I never saw one in all these years so near the house. Of course I've seen their footprints, yes, even here close to the house, but I hardly hoped to kill this one. John's keeping the men off till they are sure he's dead. I will give you two of the claws for a brooch."

Frances shuddered with schoolgirl affectation. Mrs. Day meantime took off her cloak and showed a woman's gown—short certainly but still a gown—underneath it, and called for a cup of tea. She was a little, attenuated, prematurely old woman, though she was not much past forty, and her small thin face, with its restless yet sad brown eyes, was tanned and wrinkled.

"Your room is the room you were born in," she said, sipping her tea as she seated herself on the ground like a native. "Your poor mother died in it. Dear me, it all seems like yesterday, though it is eighteen years ago. I'll show you the khud some day over which your father fell and was killed. It was fortunate your uncle had a fancy for tea-planting, and was willing to settle here, or your share wouldn't have fared so well. I didn't like the idea at all, it was so much pleasanter being with the regiment, but now I wouldn't go and live in a town on any account. You'll like this life as much as I do when you learn to shoot and ride. I've been here twenty years."

"Oh!" was Frances' only comment.

Mrs. Day looked furtively at her and then added, "You are very like your mother, she was a very pretty girl."

Softened by the implied compliment, Frances felt more amiably disposed towards her peculiar companion, and smiled at her affectionately. In its turn the wrinkled face softened and beamed, and Mrs. Day went on—

"Sometimes I've been here alone for weeks, until I learned not to be so cowardly, and to go with your uncle to the other plantation; the road is very nasty though, and sometimes I feel afraid even now. Our nearest neighbour is thirty-five miles off, and we never see any

white face, unless it is an occasional officer on a shooting excursion, and we have to send forty miles for our letters; but one gets accustomed to everything."

"But, aunt, how dull it must be."

"Not with a husband," Mrs. Day said, markedly. "One good companion is better than a stationful of gadding and gossiping acquaintances. Captain Day and I are quite content with each other, and by-and-by I hope John will marry, and then we shall be quite gay."

"Is John going to be married?" Frances asked, with seeming innocence.

Mrs. Day blushed, it was a difficult question.

"Of course he will marry some time or other," she said, after a little pause. "He will be well off, and he is such a favourite that he may expect to marry well. He's considered the best shot in the district."

"Does he go about a great deal?"

"Well, he has been to Nynee Tal, to a ball there, and he was asked to lunch by the colonel commanding the dépôt there, but he doesn't dance. There's nothing effeminate about him, and he doesn't care for silly girls; he looks more for sterling worth."

"But, aunt—where do you get your clothes?"

"Oh, you don't want many here; I dare say you have brought enough to last you a lifetime. Do people in England wear such beautiful gowns as that you have on, at home? It is fit for a ball, my dear."

"And you have no papers and books?" Frances asked, after assuring her aunt her gown was only an everyday affair.

"Oh, yes, we often have a newspaper, and when sportsmen find their way here they generally leave us a novel they have had with them; but one doesn't care for reading, there is always so much to be done."

"So much to be done?" Frances echoed.

"Yes; if I don't feed the poultry and the sheep, the cows, and horses, and pigs, myself, twice a day, the chances are the food will be stolen. Then there is our own food to give out every day, and often I have to cook it, for our servants take French leave, and we have to replace them by coolies who know nothing. There is plenty of mending, too, for no Dirzee will come to us; these stupid natives are so fond of bazaar life, they think they ought to have extra pay to live with us, so altogether I should be quite put out if visitors often came."

That evening Captain Day came home; he said it was rather inconvenient returning so soon, and he had ridden fifty-seven miles that day to welcome his niece. He was very polite to Frances, and looked, though his dress was rather dirtier and shabbier than his son's, a

gentleman. His son had not inherited his shy manner from his father. Captain Day had a decided, positive manner; one knew at the first interview with him that his will was strong, and meant to be law. Frances felt, before she went to bed, too, that with all his courtesy he would brook no contradiction; and knowing this, she felt troubled as to how he would allow of her engagement, for Captain Day was her sole guardian and trustee. Should he insist on her marrying his son, how could she flatly rebel here in these strange wilds, entirely under his control!

He was very merry over his wife's "bag" as he called it, declared he should send a notice of her prowess to the "Pioneer," and protested the tiger should be stuffed and handed down as an heirloom. The married couple were on curious terms; he called her "Day," and consulted her as he would consult a man, arguing the point with sharpness and roughness. To his son he was as a superior being; John never ventured to contest a matter with his father, while to his mother he was determined and downright. The Captain took the trouble next day to take his niece round the tea-gardens and into his office, where he did his best to inform her how far her interests were involved in the property.

"So long as your money remains here," he said, "you are sure of an increasing capital, for every year improves our business. I hope nothing will happen to make you wish to withdraw it, for it will be as unsatisfactory to you as it would be inconvenient to me."

Now was the time for Frances to have spoken of that young subaltern to whom she had promised herself, but the fact of his being a subaltern, besides something in her uncle's manner, withheld and frightened her. When her lover got his company, she thought, then she could speak with greater boldness; she would be older then, more at home with her uncle and aunt, and, if they really had any desire for John to marry her, they would be aware the young man himself did not wish her to be his wife. But the young man himself was rapidly changing his mind concerning his cousin; her youth and beauty were too pleasant to be alighted or overlooked. Life at Bahutburakhud had become wonderfully brighter since her advent; formerly it had been his sole pleasure to go out shooting, and an unpleasant necessity to return to the bungalow, but now, after exciting stalks after game, he turned homewards with alacrity, and as eagerly looked for the flutter of his cousin's pretty muslins as he had tracked the footprints of a *khākūr*. Frances soon accustomed herself to the brusquerie of the young man, to the oddities of his mother, and to the monotony of the daily life, and all through the glowing, glorious spring she was happy as only an inexperienced girl can be. Yet she never heard from her lover. John Day asked her once why "that

fellow" didn't write; "can't he afford the postage?" he added rudely. She explained, without being angry at his taunt, they had decided not to correspond till he was in a position to speak to her uncle. "We are engaged," she added with becoming dignity, "and nothing can ever part us; so what's the use of going on writing?"

John looked at her with a sarcastic smile on his plain face.

"Perhaps it's as well," he said presently, "for I don't see how you could ever get his letters, or post yours. Father manages to get some now and then when he's anywhere near Nynee Tal, but mother never writes to any one because she has nothing to write about, and I—well, I never wrote a letter in my life, except from school to mother."

"Oh, you've been to school?"

"Of course I have, but no further than Nynee Tal. I shall go to England some day; I want to see the Thames Tunnel and Astley's Circus."

Frances had never been to London, and her ideas concerning it were not much more enlightened than John's, so this was a common subject of interest between them.

After that first day Mrs. Day was not at all communicative. She was busy all day, and rarely spoke anything but Hindustanee; she never read, never wrote, never did any but the coarsest needlework. There was nothing in common between the two ladies who were thus thrown together, yet they accepted each other without question. Frances was never rebuked or advised, and never having known tenderer care than that of a schoolmistress, she missed no affectionate solicitude, nor grieved that their tastes were so opposed.

But when the weather broke up; when for days and nights thunder reverberated amongst the mountains; when murky clouds hid the pure white range; when sudden gusts of wind rushed up and round the valleys, threatening to tear the house from its rocky ledge; when deluges of rain poured down on the roof and made small pools in every room in the bungalow; when the servants crept shivering about their daily work, miserable in their comfortless poverty; when heavy fogs wrapt all nature up from sight, and flashes of lightning literally seared the air; when sudden heat set in and solemn stillness fell on all nature—precursors of earthquake shocks; when the peculiar crackling and rocking of the earth woke the girl to an overwhelming horror; when the rains fairly set in and, for weeks, walking was an impossibility, and day after day of pour-down rain steadily continued, till the streamlet in the valley beneath became a mighty torrent, and hundreds of waterfalls dashed down the hill sides; when the jungle was alive with leeches, which even obtruded themselves into the house; when every piece of rock, every inch of ground, every branch of every tree, were covered with a growth of ferns and mosses and orchids, and even boots and clothes became productive of curious vegetable life,—then Frances' spirits broke down, and she told herself that sooner than

remain at Bahutburakhud for another rainy season, she would forfeit her birthright. Never a change, but from the mouldy ruins to the dank wet verandah ; never a face, but the ordinary ones of her relations ; never a word from the outer world, for even Captain Day was constrained to stay at home in the wet season, shooting and journeying being alike difficult : no books, no music, no possible amusement of any sort or kind, nothing to prevent the might and majesty of storm and tempest preying on her imaginative mind and overwhelming it with horrors. The sounds that were hardly noticed by her relations were knells of doom to her. Her dreams were frightful. She cried herself to sleep as the storm raged outside, and awoke in terror to listen to the howl of the leopard, the maniacal cry of the hyena, the yapping of the jackal, and the moaning of the owls. One night her aunt came excitedly to her bed-side.

"Get up, get up," she cried ; "there's a splendid sight in the compound—no less than nine bears. Jack is loading our guns. We can have some first-rate sport, for the moon is up !"

It was a strange sight, a great deal stranger than pleasant, Frances thought, as she peeped out into the watery moonlight, and saw the great black figures of the beasts moving amongst the few vegetables the terraced garden boasted.

"One gets from twenty to thirty quarts of grease from one bear," Mr. Day explained ; "*my* first shot, John ; you follow fire."

Another night a horrible roar alarmed her, and in the morning John showed her the huge foot-prints of a tiger close to the servants' houses.

"He tried to get into the sheep house," John said, "and must have put his paw on the great spikes of iron, for there are spots of blood close by ; it was that made him roar."

Her nerves had become very troublesome when at last the rains began to slacken ; her brilliant English complexion was pale, and her voice had lost its mirth and clearness. John saw the change, and cunningly worked upon it.

"If I'd my way," he said, "I'd never stay here in the rains ; John Chinaman can manage for a time alone quite well. I would take a house at Nynsee Tal and go in for fun."

"What prevents you ?" Frances asked.

"Oh ! I mean if I'd a wife. I wouldn't care to go alone ; but this place is nice enough in the fine season ; it agreed with you splendidly, didn't it ?"

"Yes," she replied, "but I'd rather die than live my life here always."

She spoke with such energy that her cousin coloured with vexation.

"Look at mother !" he said, sulkily ; "she's lived here always, and she's well enough, isn't she ?—except, of course, she can't get all the fashions ; but you can at Nynsee Tal."

"I wouldn't be your mother for all the world!" she said, with so much vehemence that the absurdity of the remark was lost upon her companion, who replied with equal naivete, "Thank God you are not my mother."

She laughed. "You are buried alive here," she continued—"pray what would you do if you were very ill?"

"Die or recover," he answered, "and save a doctor's bill."

"And how could one be buried suppose one died here?"

"Oh, if you are particular you could be carried into Nynee Tal, it's only three days' march; but when I die I hope I shall be buried in the garden here, it's so nice and quiet."

"Oh, John!" she cried, "you don't know what life is; *why* don't you go to England; you don't know what nice houses, what comfort and pleasure there are there."

He gathered a heap of little stones and threw them one by one slowly over the steep side of the mountain, for they were standing on the road looking down into and over the forest of rhododendrons and oaks which clothed the precipice—then John said, without looking at his companion,

"I'll go to England on my marriage tour if you go with me, not unless!"

"Why, John!" she cried, half laughing, "how can you be so silly when you know I'm engaged? Besides you said I shouldn't suit you any more than you would suit me—so don't talk such stuff!"

"People change their minds," he continued, still looking away; "besides it would save a lot of bother if we married, and father would be pleased."

"You ignore altogether the fact of my engagement!"

"Oh, I reckon nothing of that—you flirted for want of something better to do, and he, I dare say, got wind of your money, not but that"—he added, more politely—"any fellow, even a Commissioner, might be glad to have such a pretty girl as you are. I know what officers are. I shouldn't wonder your friend is engaged to some one else by this time."

She indignantly denied the possibility.

"Till I hear he is false from his own lips," she cried, "I shall consider myself his promised wife;" and so saying she turned and walked away.

"You'd best make up your mind," John exclaimed: "father always has his way; you'd best make up your mind to have no more to say to that chap."

She was very angry as she walked home; she had begun to like John, to consider him her friend because he knew her secret, and she rather enjoyed the clumsy flirtation he carried on; not for one instant had she calculated that he who had declared her not to be to his liking as a wife would become a formidable enemy; his assurance had

been her safeguard should his father really desire their marriage, and then she began to regret the precaution she had taken of not corresponding with her lover. If she could but write to him she should be comforted, but she had herself placed the veto against it, and now she could do nothing to convince her cousin she was unchangeable. An Army List might tell her where the regiment was stationed, but to find an Army List at Bahutburakhud was about as likely as to see that day's issue of the *Times*. She was to all intents a prisoner and an exile in these horrid wilds.

"Do you never go to any town, aunt?" she asked; "is there no chance of getting books or papers anywhere? What shall we do when the winter comes?"

"Do—why, be out all day and go to bed earlier; besides, winter is our season. If any strangers are out in the district it is then, and they are sure to come here; your uncle gets papers sometimes—ask him to get some for you."

Perhaps Mrs. Day detected the inquietude of the girl's mind, and spoke to her husband on the subject.

"A little courting will put that to rights," was his comment; "but Jack is such a lout, he doesn't go the right way to work."

"Jack," he said, as he and his son strolled over to the Tea Godown, "when are you and Frances going to understand each other?"

"Oh!" said Jack, grumpily, "she's too fine for me."

"Pooh! her fine clothes will wear out soon enough, and then she'll perhaps follow your mother's example, and wear yours out for you, if you like your mother's style best."

"I don't mean that, but—she'd be moped to death here."

"Fiddlestick—she can't get into mischief then; but I can't have any shilly-shallying—take her, and be thankful she is as she is."

"Perhaps she won't take me."

"Perhaps she won't take you—chicken-hearted fellow you are! I never saw the woman yet who would refuse a good husband for no reason. Pray, what could she object to?—you are as well born and better off than she is. What would she have more?"

His father's sneering repetition of his own words annoyed John, and decoyed him into telling his cousin's secret.

"But if she knows some one else she means to have?" he cried, impatiently.

Captain Day stood still and faced his son in sudden amazement.

"Some one else," he again repeated. Then, laughing derisively, he added, "Oh! some small boy partner at a dancing school,—the girl has seen no one else."

"She has, father,—a fellow who came out with her, and she has promised to marry him."

The Captain had a long iron-tipped bamboo in his hand, and he struck it far into the ground as his son spoke.

"Then I tell you, John," he exclaimed, "she'll never get my consent; the business would be half ruined without her money. I'll never give my consent, and—you are a fool, sir, if you can't cut the presuming puppy out. I don't want to be harsh. I'm saying what I would say if she were my own child. She shan't marry a fellow no one ever heard of; she shall marry you!"

John told his father all he knew concerning his rival, and, as it happened, the Captain had heard the young man spoken of when he was last in civilized regions.

"He is a good-looking, penniless sub," he said; "she shan't have him. *If you will, you shall.*"

Father and son had lived so long amongst the natives they had imbibed native views respecting womenkind. Woman was a little above a commodity in their estimation, rather better than a pet animal, but decidedly inferior in every respect to themselves; a little coercion, especially if it was for her good, was therefore allowable.

John felt comforted by having made a confidant of his father.

When Mrs. Day was told of "Frances' folly," as the Captain called it, she merely laughed. She, with her husband, firmly believed John as nearly perfect as a young man could be. If Frances was a silly girl, blind to her own interests, why then it was her guardian's duty to insist on her choosing the right thing.

"Poor young thing," said Mrs. Day, "she'll thank us for keeping her straight when she's old enough to appreciate sterling qualities."

So it was understood by all three that in forcing a husband of their own choice upon the young lady they would act righteously.

For some time Frances did not know how she had been betrayed. It was during John's absence at another tea-garden belonging to the estate that she was made aware of her guardian's knowledge of that fact.

The Captain had always treated her with kind politeness, and though she continued to have a girlish dread of him in his character of Guardian, they had always been on excellent terms. She was his "dear little girl," his "little partner," and he always gave her his arm in to dinner, and behaved to her at table as to a guest; so she was totally unprepared when, as they were sitting together after dinner under the verandah, he said, apropos of nothing—

"I hope there is no truth in the report of your entanglement with a beardless subaltern?"

"What, uncle!" she exclaimed breathlessly.

He slowly repeated the question.

His tone was so full of contempt and menace that the girl's heart almost stopped beating. There was no light but starlight over the dim silent landscape before them, so she could not see his face, but his voice was sufficient to frighten the foolish girl who had been so

brave and bold in avowing her love to John, and only thinking of the present, indeed hardly knowing what she said until the word was spoken, she faltered "No."

"Ah!" he answered, "I was sure you would do nothing so foolish, not to say unladylike, as to take up with the first boy who had the impertinence to consider himself a match for such a girl as you. You know I was in the army, and I know how these young fellows esteem themselves, as if the gold lace on their clothes was an ample equivalent for the gold in a woman's purse—parcel of empty-headed noodles, most of them are. Well, then, having your assurance, I am content not to enquire further into the matter, though, perhaps, as your sole guardian I ought to sift it and make the young braggart eat his words."

"Oh, no, uncle," she interrupted, her head turning giddy at the sense of her own duplicity and the inference to be drawn from his words. Could it be possible her lover, who had seemed so noble and reticent, had been boasting openly of his conquest? And yet so her uncle implied? She dare not question him, she dared not admit her engagement. She had lied, she had acted like a coward; were not these thoughts enough to make her head giddy and her soul sick?

"No," Captain Day went on, "I have said I am content to receive your assurance, knowing you are a lady, and not likely to act like a silly schoolgirl. But now let us understand each other. My son John wishes to make you his wife; he is your cousin, so I need not add he is well born. At my death he will own very considerable property. There is no one that I know more suited to you than he is. He is a good lad, and well-fitted to take care of you; best fitted, indeed, for your interests and his are the same. I have been thinking a trip to Europe would do him good; he can go so well now in my lifetime, and it would be a nice tour for a honeymoon—what do you say?"

"Uncle," at last she found strength to say, "we don't like each other."

Captain Day laughed. "Nay, my dear child," he said, "I know for a fact poor John is desperately smitten, and as for you, you need not be bashful with me. Love begets love." Then he told her they would say no more on the subject at that time, and she left him, and went to her room, utterly dismayed.

If her soldier lover was false, she thought, what did it matter what became of her. She could not despise him as much as she despised herself, but how could she go on living in these solitudes? Then, as a flash of relief, she remembered her uncle's bait—the tour to Europe—relief, even as John's wife; but, she could not and would not believe her lover was untrue, and she cried herself to sleep.

Next morning Captain Day told her, jocosely, he had dispatched a coolie to recall John. Again here was an opening for a confession,

but again Frances let her fears triumph, and was silent. Instead, however, of John returning "in wedding haste," the coolie came back alone to tell how a man-eating tiger had frightened the tea coolies away, and until John could—as he elegantly wrote—"pot the beast," he must remain where he was.

Both Captain and Mrs. Day were greatly excited at this news, and the former determined to go off to his son's help. Five men had one after another been taken by the brute, and, unless he could be killed at once, the Days would suffer serious loss through deficiency of workmen. It was with difficulty Mrs. Day could be persuaded to remain where she was. She felt sure her son would be eaten, perhaps her husband too; and it required the peremptory command of the latter to make her give up the idea of sharing his journey.

The six weeks that followed before the tiger was successfully disposed of were to Frances weeks of unmitigated dreariness and disquietude. Mrs. Day never once alluded to the matter that was distracting her young guest, and the inability to seek advice, or even to talk openly, added greatly to the girl's mental suffering. Christmas was at hand before the gentlemen returned, and the snow lay thick upon the mountains all round.

John met his cousin as he had met her at first, with a blush and a nervous tremor, and for more than a week after his return he avoided her society, and nothing was said further concerning their marriage until one morning early in the New Year, when Frances on awaking heard strange voices in the compound, strange, that is, at first, but presently one sounded that made her jump hastily out of bed and fly to her curtained window, but she could see no one, only heard with ears that flushed and tingled with overpowering delight the voice she so longed to hear once more—the voice of her soldier lover!

He spoke evidently to her uncle.

"I believe I have the pleasure of seeing Captain Day?"

"I am Captain Day."

"I am Lieutenant Græme of the 2nd Lancers."

"Indeed."

"I am on leave, as you may guess—shooting with a brother officer.

I—I have the pleasure of knowing Miss Day."

"Miss Day is in England."

"In England! No, surely not; she only—"

"Am I a liar, sir?"

Frances stayed to hear no more, but began huddling on her clothes as rapidly as possible, with the intention of rushing out to give the right answer to her uncle's question, and if need be to throw herself on her lover's protection, and implore him to take her away with him; but strings and buttons were at enmity with her trembling fingers, nor can a nineteenth century heroine show herself in dishabille

even to gain her liberty ; her hair must be brushed, her collar must be pinned, and though her haste was frantic, she was too late. She ran outside to find only her uncle calmly smoking, no other human being in sight.

"Well!" he exclaimed, as if startled from a reverie. "Well, what's amiss, little one?—got out of the wrong side of bed? Eh?"

She lost control over herself ; her disappointment was greater than she could bear. With tears and sobs of grief and anger, she accused him of perjury, and declared wildly she would run away and rather die in the snow or be eaten by wild beasts than remain under his roof.

He kept silence until her passion wore itself out, than he said calmly,

"You'd better go to bed again till you recover. What *do* you mean? If you have been listening to what passed between me and a puppy who rode up with all the assurance of a little king, you heard nothing but the truth. My sister, Miss Day, is in England, isn't she? What can her friends be to you that you should rave in so unwomanly a manner?"

"He meant me, uncle ; he knew nothing of Aunt Day, he meant me ! Oh, won't you call him back?"

"No, certainly not, it's bad enough to have every servant witnessing your conduct to me. I would rather not have an *Englishman* able to bruit it abroad."

She stood sobbing before him. What could she do? She had told a lie ; here was the consequence : her lover was true ; it was she who had been false and wicked. She was irresolute, but for an instant. With drooping head and voice that savoured of shame, instead of anger, she confessed her fault.

Her uncle acted his part well. "Is it possible?" he exclaimed, as if full of righteous horror at her conduct. "I thought *you* discreet and truthful. Oh, Frances, how grieved I am to find you otherwise!"

She was touched to the quick, he had touched the right chord, she was grateful for his forbearance ; she was shamefaced, heart-broken, and it was in a very faint tone she again asked for her lover to be recalled.

Captain Day sorrowfully shook his head. "The young man is not worthy of you, though you have fallen in my estimation," he said. "He is hot-headed and empty-minded, let him go ; with my consent you shall not see him. When you are of age you can throw yourself away if you like."

A miserable day followed. In the evening John came into the sitting room where she was alone, and asked what had occurred. He had been absent when the stranger came. She was so miserable, she was glad to speak of her trouble even to him—her enemy.

He listened kindly, and refrained from any of his customary rude remarks, nor did he say a word in his own interest.

"Don't make yourself ill," he said, touched by her dejection; "and I'll go and try what can be done to-morrow. I'll tell the chap father made a mistake."

"Will you really?" she cried joyfully.

"I give you my word," he answered.

She put both her hands into his, and smiled gratefully through her tears. He let her hands drop awkwardly, and went away.

But he was sincere, and he rode off early next day, and did not reappear till night.

She was standing out in the snow to see him return.

"Well?" she asked eagerly.

"I had to go all the way to Sufamutkest-House," he said, "before I found him. As soon as he heard my name he insulted me. I swear I'm telling you the truth. He said he never wished to see one of my family again, and that he should be glad to get out of our neighbourhood."

"Uncle must have offended him," Frances exclaimed. "I heard loud talking while I was making haste to dress. You should have explained, John. He thinks, no doubt, I have gone back to England, and he is angry I have gone without a word to him."

"He wouldn't listen," John continued: "he was as savage as a bear. I tell you he turned his back on me, and called for his breakfast, as if I was not there. I would have licked the fellow but for you, Frances; I was never so insulted in my life before."

"What shall I do! Oh, what shall I do!" she cried.

"Do? Why, show him you can do without him. Don't cry, dear; don't cry; there's a dear. Come along and have some tea. I'm ravenous."

She was very humble to him. He seemed her only friend; for between her and her aunt had passed nothing concerning the stranger's visit.

Mrs. Day was sorry to see the girl so miserable, but would not invite confidence, because she could not comfort without interfering with her son's interests. A few days passed in ominous calm, and then Captain Day again spoke to his ward.

If she would promise to act cautiously for the future, he said, taking a high hand, he would give his consent to her marriage with his son, and would provide them with handsome means to allow them to visit England *via* Brindisi, that they might see some of the principal Continental cities *en route*. If they were married at once they would just be in time to travel before the heat strengthened. If she did not agree to this plan, he must remove her to his bungalow on the other plantation, where she was less likely to see undesirable acquaintances.

This was a weighty threat. Mrs. Day had told her she considered Bahutburakhud quite in the world, compared with Chotakhud. It

lay four marches further away in the mountains, on the border of a lonely lake ; it was approached by a mere coolie track, and was altogether out of the pale of civilization. To be sent there, therefore, to be shut up there all through the terrible rainy season, was an idea that made her tremble.

"Need I give an answer to-day?" she said.

He graciously allowed her three days for consideration, "wishing to treat her with the utmost consideration compatible with his duty;" and during those three days she knew she was a prisoner. Whenever she went outside the house, she was aware her aunt and her uncle contrived to come out too—accidentally of course ; and once when she went beyond the compound with some faint idea of meeting some one with whom she could fly to her lover's care, the Khidmutgar came sauntering after her. At the end of the given time, in her despair, she spoke to John.

"Will you not be generous, and refuse to marry me?"

John stammered and blushed. He would do anything to please her, but not that. She could never have Lieutenant Græme : why should she not have *him*—John ? Wouldn't it be nice to start off for Europe before the hot spring and the dreary summer came on ? While they were away, perhaps arrangements might be made to let them live at Nynee Tal, and only visit Bahutburrahud occasionally. She should always do as she liked with him, and he wouldn't mind what she spent on her dress ! This last argument he believed irresistible, and waited to observe its effect.

But she did nothing but cry. What did she care for dress, except to make her look nice in the eyes she loved ? and she did not love one of her relations ; nor did she care where she lived if she married John—the further out of the world the better, so that she might not see strangers sneer at her husband's ignorance and eccentricity. At length a truce was made. They were to be engaged for six months. At the end of that time their marriage must take place. Six months is a long period in youth, and Frances felt for a while something of her former contentment. John never presumed upon the new relations existing between them, never attempted to be loverlike, and for that she was grateful to him ; but as the early spring stole on, and the lovely weather began to show signs of breaking up, heralding the annual deluge, her spirits sunk. Three months, four months, passed away out of the six given to her, and relief was more unlikely than ever. She would sit and watch the rosy geranium-trees fade day by day, the picturesque toon-tree unfold its feathery leaves, the wild roses drop their pale sweet blossoms, the starry jasmine grow sickly and decay ; and as each bright bud opened and each fair blossom died, she knew time was striding onward, and her unhappy fate coming nearer and nearer. In those days of solitary musings she grew to loathe the sight of the beautiful

mountains, to see no beauty in the golden glory of sunset spread over the snowy range, to weary of the incessant babbling of the clear waters of the valley below; the heights seemed to crush her soul, the immensity of the landscape to oppress her beyond endurance; the unbroken stillness, the unvarying scene, the absence of all communication with the outside world, were more than she could support; and when at last the rains had fairly begun, with their accompanying horrors of storm and tempest, her heart gave way, and dreading to die in this wilderness, she went to her uncle and begged him to let John marry her at once, and take her away out of the gloom that was killing her.

Thus with her own hand Frances hastened on her doom, and according to her wish preparations were made to start for Nynee Tal, where was the nearest chaplain. Mrs. Day's preparations were simple enough. She had some of her husband's white shirts washed to be worn by her as white bodies.

"Mother's coming out swell," John remarked; "she's written for an alpaca gown—the first new gown she's had for twenty years."

John himself ordered a black tail-coat and stone-coloured trousers for his wedding suit; he wished to have a waistcoat made out of the skins of musk-rats, but that his father peremptorily forbade; and black satin, spotted with amber, was finally ordered. The bridegroom did not discuss his wedding dress in his bride's presence, or his taste might have roused her from her apathy.

She was going away from Bahutburrakhud; that was all she understood clearly in those last days of her stay there. All beyond possessed no interest; she was going to shift the scene, to lose sight of the solemn ghostlike snowy mountains, to hear sounds of life and progress, instead of the wail of wild beasts and the moan or shriek of the fierce storm-blast. All other senses seemed dulled. She was going into civilization; that was enough; and with feverish impatience she grudged every moment of her stay in these hated solitudes. The last day arrived. Bedding and provisions were packed. Forty coolies lay in the outhouses, ready to start at dawn with their burthens; and tired out with packing, Frances sat in the verandah, towards sunset, looking her last on the magnificent scenery which she had come to consider hateful. Grandeur and more solemn than ever it stretched before her; deepening purples and brightening golds, faintest rose and palest gray, brilliant orange and red tints, were on hillside and sky; the shout of the cuckoo, the gamut of the koela, the laugh of monkeys, the chatter of the green parrots, the clear, sweet whistle of the white-ruffed blackbird, the low, melodious song of the bulbul, and the harsh bass of the indestructible crows, made music in the air; the evening was very calm; there was a lull in the season,

and as she sat and gazed, and felt herself refreshed, she was constrained to admire and not detest the land that had brought her so much sorrow.

"But I will never come back again," she said to herself. "I would rather die;" and then wild plans for running away and seeking protection so soon as she reached the European station, ran riot in her brain.

By-and-by John Day came up the stairlike path; he had been out for hours, inquiring the state of the roads, which, never very good, were constantly washed away during the rains. He got off his pony at the entrance to the compound, and taking his rifle from his servant, came with his usual awkward stoop towards his cousin. She looked at him and noticed he was tired, when in an instant his figure became erect, his face full of excitement, and to her horror, she saw him raise his rifle and aim at her.—When, after a few moments, she regained her consciousness, she found herself on the sofa, and, to her surprise, uninjured, while the Days stood watching her, and several servants peeped in at the open doors.

"You were nearly killed," Mrs. Day exclaimed, as the girl's eyes inquiringly sought hers; "but not by poor Jack. As he came towards you he saw a *Tic polonga*, the most venomous snake in India, raising its head to dart at you. No one has ever been bitten by it and recovered; had he hesitated one instant you would have been poisoned."

"If I'd stopped to think," John said, "he'd have been at you, the brute!"

"But *you* might have killed me!" Frances said, ungratefully ignoring the service he had rendered.

"Pooh!" said the Captain, "I should hope John knows how to aim; the pity was he only had a rifle, for the reptile is blown to pieces, and he would have bottled famously if he'd been killed tenderly."

This incident completely upset poor Frances. She had to give up the idea of riding next day, and to go in a dandy; so instead of having only one dandy in the cavalcade—that in which the ayah was carried—there were *two*, a most fortunate circumstance, as after events proved.

They were ready to start at dawn, but were delayed by the difficulty of getting the coolies, for though the latter had been collected over night and their burthens allotted each, yet the coolie nature is against regularity, punctuality, and common sense.

"Where are the fellows for the dandy?" the Captain cried in vain, and it took some moments while John went over the servants' houses and captured one man here coolly smoking his hookah, and another there plaiting his hair, and others just preparing their morning meal of unleavened cakes, one and all evincing a stolid indifference to time

to their employers, and, after the manner of the East Indian, to *everything* except their stomach and their pay. Then the bundles had to be re-arranged—some could only carry on their heads, some could only consent to convey burthens slung on sticks, others must have shoulder loads, and, as usual, all spoke at once,—coolies, servants and masters—or rather all *shouted* at once, making a noise that to Frances's inexperienced ears must lead to violent action. But the native rarely uses his limbs if his tongue may have fair play. At last all the loads were taken up and the procession started.

Mrs. Day rode a Bhootia pony, as did also her husband and son. The lady wore an enormous sun-hat, in shape like two porters' knots joined *vis-à-vis*, and the favourite old military cloak was tied in at the waist by a leathern strap, from which hung a large clasp knife, a long hook for taking stones out of the pony's foot, a currycomb for her own hair and the pony's mane, and a small case containing a saddler's needle and thread and scissors, to mend any disaster that might happen to the saddlery. She kept the coolie who carried the day's provisions at her side, while the Captain made it his business to watch the progress of all the baggage, threatening stragglers and encouraging the willing ones in tones that reverberated strangely through the silent land. A gray dull day had followed the gorgeous evening, but it was wonderful, to have a day without rain at that season, and the travellers were thankful for the absence of the sun. John rode as near to the dandy as he could, and Frances, making herself bear in mind she owed to him her life, did her best to respond to his remarks cheerfully. At noon they stopped at a lonely stone shed, all round which were the marks of recent fires and litter of ponies. Here they lunched, and let the servants rest. In a very few moments fires were kindled, meal bags opened, and a lively scene of cooking and washing commenced. The brawling stream, whose course the mountain road followed, was here conveniently accessible, and served for drinking, cooking, and bathing purposes. Here, kneeling over the water, was a man noisily brushing his teeth with a bit of bamboo, and rinsing throat and mouth violently. A few yards further stood one knee-deep in the water performing his ablutions. There, squatting close to the brink, over a handful of fire, were two or three kneading bread and mixing the dough with water; while close by sat half-a-dozen idlers smoking, and letting their tired feet play in the grateful stream. All day till sunset the travellers journeyed on, now on a level with the bed of the river, now hundreds of feet above it, now climbing a narrow ledge midway up the barren hill side, now rounding a deep ravine amidst rhododendron woods, and oak or pine forests; sometimes having a limitless view, over countless mountain ranges, to where a boundless level, canopied by heat haze, proclaimed the vast fiery plains; and sometimes seeing only a few yards ahead as the path narrowed and

wound amidst a wilderness of exquisite ferns and creepers growing amongst the tall rank underwood and trees. Countless streams trickled or dashed down their mossy beds, and every angle in the road was lined with a profusion of rare plants and shrubs—children of the intense damp of the rainy season—that would have made the fortune of an English florist. Such a wealth of loveliness, such unimagined luxury of colouring and foliage, such indescribable delicacy and harmony of tints, appear year after year in those distant wilds, seen but by a dozen creatures capable of appreciating them.

With infinite care and immense expense, the wife of the millionaire forms a collection of sickly ferns and orchids which she proudly shows to a favoured few, and in the dampest corner of her trim grounds she rears a grotto with an artistically trained flow of purling water, to see which visitors press eagerly; but amidst the vast Himalayas, God has bountifully strewn countless beauties—the rarest and loveliest of their kind—and has formed nooks and views that make the enraptured traveller breathless with their exceeding beauty, though the natives of these regions are of a lower type, are more ignorant and more stupid, more debased in their habits and repulsive in their persons than any other of the natives of wide-spreading Asia. Beasts of burthen, and nothing higher, are these poor mountaineers, toiling up and down the breakneck paths as doggedly and with little more intelligence than the salt-laden sheep, or the ragged under-sized tattoo that conveys cloth and stores to the mountain towns. These poor wretched people were the only human beings met with all the long way, and few of them betrayed any curiosity at sight of the Europeans.

"We shall see plenty of white faces at Nynnee Tal," Frances said.

"Yes," Mrs. Day replied; "and don't they look washed out after these bronze-coloured people?"

"Yes," her husband added. "No doubt the dark skin and the large black eyes of the East Indian are far handsomer than our pale undecided complexions."

"I suppose one gets accustomed to anything," Frances said with a deep sigh, while in her heart she felt convinced neither time nor custom could reconcile her to John Day and Bahutburakkhud.

They passed the night at a dāk bungalow on the edge of a tremendous landslip, which had occurred two years before, and the Captain hoped, as they separated for the night, the ground under their feet would not fall till they were off it.

"It isn't safe," he said, complacently; "but it's too wet to camp out, so we must risk it."

A violent storm came on during the night, and the morning dawned on leaden skies and a drenched earth. There was a consultation as to the prudence of waiting for fine weather, but Mrs. Day decided against delay.

"The roads will be worse after each storm," she argued, "and we are not half-way through the rains yet."

The argument was irresistible, and in a steady drizzle the party pursued their journey. Mrs. Day's groom did not appear when her pony came round, and on inquiry he was declared to be stricken down with fever and ague. With the foolhardiness, or rather senselessness of his people, he had slept out in the open grass, and when the storm came on had been too heavy with sleep to change his resting-place.

"Fool!" cried the Captain, "he deserves a rare good licking, and if he isn't well by the time we return, I'll give him one;" but the Captain never returned to carry out his threat.

As they proceeded, they found the road had suffered much from the night's tempest, and every native they met declared it had been carried away in places; but allowances must always be made for Eastern exaggeration, and they pushed on. For once, however, the natives did not exaggerate, and presently a turn in the path disclosed a great gap in it. Here, however, the earth had not fallen far—the mountain side projected within a few yards below, and the débris of the road afforded safe footing for a scramble to the other side of the dislodgement. The next stoppage was more serious.

The pathway continually penetrated above deep ravines far into the heart of the mountain, till reaching the end of the opening it was joined by a rustic bridge over the deep drop to the corresponding pathway running along the further side. In this particular far-reaching inlet, a superb sheet of crested water came grandly over the face of the hill, and fell with roar and crash sheer down the precipice below the road. The little bridge had been broken by the force of the water, and afforded no footing except for a yard or so from each bank.

Captain Day shouted to a group of coolies composedly seated on the other side, and they told him the water would subside in the course of a few hours, when it would be possible to patch up the bridge.

"A few hours!" the Captain cried impatiently. "Inert idiots these nigs are. Let's have a rope and go hand-over-hand."

Even John objected to this plan as too dangerous an experiment, but both father and mother laughed at his prudence.

"Your mother and I," he said, "have crossed many a worse thing than this. I'm not going to sit shivering here till that drop thins; if only that fool your mother's syce were here, it would be comparatively easy, for he knows the dodge so well. You and Frances can wait if you choose."

John was stung by his father's contemptuous tone. "If any one can cross," he said, "I can; look here," and darting forward, he ran along the quivering pole that stretched a little way over the flood, and which had been one of the two main supports of the bridge, and

thence, with a bound imitated from the tiger, he alighted safely on the other side.

The phlegmatic natives were roused into sufficient excitement to utter "Wah, wah!" admiringly at his daring, while his parents loudly applauded him.

Mrs. Day jumped off her pony—"I can cross in the same way," she exclaimed, "it's not much of a jump, after all."

Her husband pulled her back. "Nay, twenty years ago you could; not now. Don't be a fool, Day," he cried, "here's the rope."

So a stout rope was flung across the chasm, and clinging to it with his hands, his body hanging over the flood, Captain Day worked himself safely across, and his wife prepared to follow. For Frances there was nothing but waiting; she was horrified at the mere idea of venturing after her aunt, and disagreeable as was the thought of the weary waiting, she was resolved to be patient rather than venture-some. Mrs. Day set out valiantly, her slight little figure with its extraordinary garments surging to and fro, as she went on hand over hand—such thin little hands. She had got to the further side, and her husband, bending down, had already hold of her wrist, when she suddenly let go with one hand, and dragging her husband with her, she fell down the precipice quicker than the roaring water!

It was barely eleven o'clock when this happened, but it was eight in the evening before the travellers proceeded on their way. For hours the cousins waited one on each side of the cruel torrent, till little by little the roar subsided as the fall thinned. As soon as it had reached a less formidable spread, the young man and his servants clambered over the hill-side, and after long and agonising search came upon the mutilated bodies. Their death must have been instantaneous, for they had fallen nearly 100 feet. They lay within a few yards of each other; Mrs. Day, the lightest, having dropped furthest. It was a work of time and great difficulty to carry them up to the road. Meantime a number of villagers had collected to mend the bridge, over which Frances was carried just as John and his precious burthens appeared.

"You will ride mother's pony," he said, "we want both dandies."

He spoke in his usual manner, and issued his orders promptly. He made no comment upon what had happened, yet it was plain he was sorely wounded; his shriek when his parents fell had reached Frances above the rush of the waterfall, and for an instant he had seemed about to throw himself headlong after them. His cousin did her best to hide the terror she felt at riding the dangerous roads in the uncertain light, for though the moon was up, the sky was thick with clouds. But all through her life the horrors of that day and night were vividly present to her whenever she was out of health. The two marches to Nynce Tal had to be made one,

on account of the necessity for reaching the station as quickly as possible, so all through the night the ghastly procession toiled on.

Every rustle in the jungle, every cry of wild animals, every sound made the girl's heart beat with terror. When they entered the woods, torches were lighted, and the men shouted at intervals to scare away the tiger and the leopard, but on the unsheltered ledge over the bare mountain side the torches were extinguished, and in the dim light the awful depths below assumed yet more awful profundity. First in the procession the two dandies were carried, and their heavy swing between the bearers was horribly significant ; after them rode John, then Frances, then the Ayah, mounted on the Captain's pony, and last of all the baggage. Now and then they passed a heap of coolies huddled together for protection round a bonfire. Sometimes a halt was made to allow the men to refresh themselves for a few moments with the hookah, but the silence of the little party was rarely broken. It was almost noon next day when the last great ascent was made, and they saw stretched 800 feet beneath them the deep dark lake and the picturesque houses of Nynee Tal. As they began to descend John placed himself on foot in front and whistled the "Dead March in Saul" solemnly until the dāk bungalow was reached.

"Father would have had that played before him had he died while an officer," he said, as he assisted his cousin from her pony. "If he could have heard me, he'd have been pleased I showed him such an attention."

That evening when the bodies were carried over to the burial-ground, John, arrayed in what was to have been his wedding suit, again slowly marched at the head, whistling.

The chaplain stopped him at the entrance to the church-yard, and by reminding him of his duty as chief mourner, prevented the poor fellow making himself a butt for scoffers any longer.

On his return to the bungalow he freed Frances from her engagement to him.

Ten years afterwards Frances Day, who was living with a maiden aunt, met her cousin John again. They had parted at Nynee Tal the day after the funeral, she to remain with the chaplain's wife till she could find an escort to England, he to return to his tea-plantation. Since then they had not even corresponded, though they were aware of each other's movements through their agents. Very soon after Frances' coming of age John had sold the estate and quitted India. He travelled over the Continent of Europe, and did his best to repair the want of proper cultivation in his boyhood by seeking the society of clever men and studying standard literature. When he presented himself to his cousin she was struck by the improvement in his manner and person. Mr. Day, the accomplished traveller, bore little

resemblance to "Jack Sahib" of Bahutburrakhud. Frances was altered for the better too. The terrible accident she had witnessed, the mental trials she had undergone, had borne good fruit. The realities of life, its uncertainty, its trials, had been brought home to her, and when she again met John she could appreciate the good sense, and reverence the good heart. They saw each other constantly for a month ; at the end of that time John asked her to be his wife.

"There is no one but you in all the world," he said, "who has the same memories with me. I have many good friends, and yet at times I feel so terribly alone, so crushed with the memory of that sorrowful past, that I long even for old Muddea or 'Jān Cheeniman' to speak to of my old home. I have done my best during the last few years to make myself more like other men of my position, and tried hard to rub off the rusticity of my bringing up. I have even taken pains to brush my hair," he added, smiling, "but until lately I never allowed myself to think why I did it all. Since meeting you again I have discovered my aim has been to become less disagreeable in your eyes, Frances. I know better now than to press myself upon you by saying our marriage would save bother, but indeed it will save my life from being cheerless and purposeless. Give me the right to make you forget the sadness of our former engagement in a new one under happy auspices. I have loved you all these years, and you are associated with my tenderest memories."

Surely there is no greater magician than Time. Frances had once declared from her heart, she would rather die than marry John Day, and now she admitted she could imagine no greater earthly happiness than wedded life with him.

"What about Lieutenant Græme?" John asked, when he had assured himself of his cousin's affection.

She laughed and blushed as she remembered her high and mighty behaviour concerning the said Lieutenant Græme.

"I saw him at a ball in London five years since," she said ; "he was good enough to recognize me and to ask me to dance, and afterwards he begged to be allowed to introduce his wife to me !"

"Well, and you shrieked and fainted, of course ; or assumed an appearance of dignified scorn, eh ?"

"No, I didn't. I was so astonished at not feeling anything but amused surprise that I forgot what was due to my betrayed affection, and actually got up quite a liking for the young lady, and used to visit her and play with her babies till they returned to India."

"But you must have lost all your gushing romance !" John said. "Ah ! you are not the same Frances Day who begged my father to hasten our marriage. Pray, are you going to insist on no delay this time ?"

POWDER AND PATCHES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SACRISTAN'S HOUSEHOLD."

DUST and shadows ! "*Pulvis et umbra sumus*," said Diderot to his contemporaries, quoting ancient wisdom, and the words, hackneyed enough as applied to humanity in general, have a striking and sinister signification when used to characterize that brilliant butterfly generation, which was so soon to have its painted wings scorched and shrivelled in the conflagration of the great French Revolution.

But for our present purpose the Latin words might be freely rendered "Powder and Patches ;" for it is of a famous portrait painter that the following pages are to treat—of the Venetian artist Rosalba Carriera, whose pictures in pastel excited the highest enthusiasm among the amateurs and cognoscenti of her day, and still retain an honourable position in the art collections of Europe. She painted the *pulvis et umbra* of the days of the Regency ;—glittering dust, in truth, and gay magic-lantern shadows ! And the medium she used to portray them was a singularly appropriate one. "Pastel was the true means of representing these personages. Pastel gave the true colour of their century ; its powdery butterfly tints were suitable for these fickle butterflies, these voluptuous Phalenes ! What mortal could ever have reproduced them in oils !" Thus writes M. Julius Hubner, of the Dresden Museum. *Pulvis et umbra erant !*

Although not an artist of the first rank, Rosalba Carriera has for us the great and interesting merit of having preserved faithful representations of the men and women of her time. The medium she used would scarcely have been chosen by a genius of a robuster type ; although, as a recent biographer of hers truly observes, all tools are good to a great workman. This writer (M. Alfred Sensier) further says : "Rosalba chose this way because it was the road to success, and because she had not the force to compel Fortune, but only to follow her. But having once entered on this path she availed herself of all the advantages which it offered, with real talent."

Some persons have erroneously supposed her to be the inventor of pastel painting ; but there is abundant evidence to show that such was not the case. In the first place, as M. Sensier points out, this method, or one closely analogous to it, was known to the most ancient masters. It would not be difficult to point out traces of it in the sketches, cartoons, and studies which those masters have left us. Later, Leonardo da Vinci, Correggio, Guido, &c., appropriated to themselves certain qualities of the pastel. Indeed, there needs but one sunny day to transform "*distemper*" into pastel. Water colours became pastels when they were solidified into a paste and dried. And

the same medium which serves to bind the colours in distemper painting, i. e. gum, is used also to give solidity and firmness to the pastel.

It is nearly certain that the first to suggest to Rosalba the use of pastels, was an Englishman named Cole, who was in Italy as early as the year 1704. Letters of his to the Venetian artist are extant—notably one written from Rome,—wherein he makes mention of her works in pastel, and promises to send her by some English friends of his a supply of pastels and some tinted paper.

But although Rosalba Carriera by no means invented painting in pastel, yet she undoubtedly made it the fashion amongst the great folks of her day throughout Europe. And, what is far better, she produced by this means a large number of delicately conceived, highly finished, and interesting portraits.

Rosalba was born at Venice on the 7th of October, 1675. Her father was a native of the neighbouring city of Chioggia, and her mother a Venetian, whose maiden name was Alba Foresti. Her parents held the rank of respectable citizens, but were very poor. Her father filled a government office under the Venetian Republic, in Chioggia, whence he was removed to Venice before Rosalba's birth. But the rest of the Carriera family, and Rosalba's heirs (i. e., the Pedrottis and Penzos) always inhabited Chioggia; and her first biographer, the Canonico Vianelli, was himself a *Chioggiote*.

Rosalba had two sisters, both younger than herself: Giovanna and Angela. The affectionate friendship which subsisted among the three sisters was not broken to the close of their lives. Giovanna died unmarried in 1737, when Rosalba was sixty-two years old. Angela married young. Her husband was Antonio Pellegrini, a Venetian painter, who possessed the gift of covering huge spaces of wall or canvas with showy pictures in an incredibly short space of time. But there is no need of further allusion to him at present.

Of the infancy and early youth of Rosalba very little is known. She lived in the midst of a family who had to endure frequent struggles with poverty. Her father's salary did not suffice for the needs of his household, and her mother felt it necessary to bring her own personal exertions to their assistance. She became a lace-maker, and devoted herself especially to the manufacture of that elaborate and rich kind of lace called *Venice-point*. It was a manufacture which at that time had no equal of its own species in Europe. Eminent artists used to furnish designs for this elegant fabric, and some of our little Rosalba's first efforts with her pencil were made in drawing patterns for her mother to work from. Andrea Carriera, her father, drew, and even painted a little. There were artistic traditions in the family; for Andrea's grandfather, Andrea Pasquelino, had been a painter of considerable merit.

Thus the little band of workers—father, mother, and daughters

(for the two younger girls were early enlisted into the common service), lived peaceably, industriously, and obscurely, throughout the glittering days of Venetian decadence, undisturbed by the wars which agitated the reign of Louis the Fourteenth of France, and kept his Italian neighbours in a ferment. Obscurely and industriously they lived, but one might venture to say not unhappily. Indeed, for Rosalba that time must have held elements of very great happiness. She was employing the artistic faculties of her nature, however humbly, for the assistance of those she loved best. And it may be that those years of youth, and toil, and hope, were often looked back on with a vague regret by the successful artist, the idol of fashionable dames and cavaliers, the caressed and flattered of princes, in the midst of her brilliant and busy career. She was to the last a prodigious worker. And on one occasion she records in her diary that she had not slept for two nights past, from having overworked herself.

The designing patterns for, and the dainty manufacture of, Venice point, went on prosperously enough among the *Carrieras* for some time. But the tide of fortune, which had never risen high with them, ebbed suddenly. Venice point-lace went out of fashion! The poor mother, though seeing her usual means of gain diminish, and finally cease, lost no whit of her courage and industry. She applied herself to making tapestry work for furniture. She seems to have been a thoroughly sound-hearted, excellent woman. The best testimony to her worth—and the only one, we may be sure, which she much valued in her old age—lies in the fact of her children's unchanging affection and respect for her to the close of her long life.

But tapestry work, like lace-making, seemed to Rosalba but a temporary and inadequate resource. Her force of character and the consciousness of her own talents alike impelled her to strive for a higher career than such pursuits offered. Fashion, which had ruined the lace-making, afforded a chance of something better—a chance on which Rosalba seized with the energy that belonged to her. As M. Sensier expresses it, "The empire of tobacco had prevailed." That is to say, that all the fine folks, and the folks who desired to be fine, took snuff: and the painting and ornamenting of snuff-boxes became quite a lucrative business.

There was in those days in Venice a Frenchman named Jean Stève, whose profession it was to paint miniatures on snuff-boxes. From him Rosalba received some hints, and so put them to profit that in a very short time she acquired a reputation for delicacy and skill in the painting of snuff-boxes. But this, of course, did not satisfy her legitimate ambition. She soon devoted herself to painting miniature portraits; and having taken lessons from Antonio Laggaire and Diamantini, made the further advance of trying her hand at oil-painting.

During the lifetime of her Italian biographer, the Canon Vianelli, there existed a curious specimen of Rosalba's efforts in oils. It was in Chioggia, in the house of her heirs, the Pedrottis, and represented his Majesty, Augustus the Third, Elector of Saxony, and King of Poland, with a huge peruque on his head, and wearing a red coat, and a cross on his breast.

But oil-painting was never seriously pursued by Rosalba as a profession. Partly, no doubt, she measured her own strength and found it wanting, beside even contemporary painters, such as Pietro Liberi, and others; not to speak of the mighty masters by whose works she was surrounded in her native Venice. Partly also, I think M. Julius Hubner's dictum to be a correct one, and that the true way to pourtray the world on which her searching brown eyes looked, was felt by Rosalba with feminine intuition to be the dainty tints of the miniature painter, or the smooth, soft, powdery pastels.

Already, in the year 1698, Rosalba had begun to be known as a clever miniature painter, and by the middle of 1700, her reputation had spread abroad beyond her native country. The war brought foreigners into the north of Italy, and Venice, remaining neutral between the belligerents, became a sort of common ground, and was visited by the officers of both armies. Commissions flowed in upon Rosalba. Periwigged heroes were eager to carry off with them specimens of her talent. It became the rage to order one's portrait of the Venetian artist. From this period miniature painting absorbed all her time, and also, unfortunately, the extreme minuteness of the work, which she carried to a very high degree of finish, began sensibly to affect her eyesight.

The exact date at which Rosalba renounced all other methods of painting for pastel, cannot be fixed, but it must have been *about* the year 1704, at which period, as has been previously stated, she became acquainted with the Englishman, Cole. No sooner had she been initiated into the resources of pastel painting, than she withdrew to a country house belonging to a certain Signor Gabrielli (an old friend of her family whom she frequently mentions in her diary and letters), and there shutting herself up so as to be free from the influence of any other artist, she set herself to paint from nature all that she saw around her. Her first portrait was that of a female servant of the house, and she went on to take the portrait of every member of the family. Then, being sure of her powers, she returned to Venice, where this new method carried her to the height of popularity. She was speedily talked of as the *prima pittrice* of Europe, in her *genre*.

In 1705 she was elected a member of the Academy of Saint Luke, at Rome. Her diploma picture was praised with an enthusiasm which appears highly exaggerated now. The painter Crespi, known under the name of Lo Spagnuolo, declared that to find Rosalba's

equal it would be necessary to bring Guido Reni to life again! And in that day Guido Reni held a much higher position in the world of art than a later posterity has confirmed him in. Honours were showered thickly on our Rosalba during the years succeeding her admission to the Roman Academy. Frederick the Fourth, King of Denmark, passed through Venice in 1709, and ordered 'his own portrait, of her, and, moreover, the miniatures of twelve of the most beautiful Venetian ladies of the day! On whom the somewhat invidious task of selecting the "twelve most beautiful ladies" fell, is not stated! The next year she received a gold medal from the Elector Palatine in return for a pastel picture which he had ordered from her. The medal was attached to a gold chain and ring, weighing twenty ounces, and enclosed in an enamel box valued at six hundred crowns.

Meanwhile Angela Carriera's husband, Antonio Pellegrini, had been prospering in the world. He was sent for to Düsseldorf to execute some works on a large scale. Thither his wife accompanied him, thus breaking up for a time the united little family circle at Venice. M. Sensier calls Pellegrini "a terrible *prestidigitator*." It is certain that he undertook and executed colossal pictures in an incredibly short space of time. And it is probable that this fatal facility injured the legitimate development of his talents, as it has injured the talent and the fame of greater painters than he.

The year 1715 was an important one in Rosalba's life. In it she made the acquaintance of two celebrated men. One was Pierre Crozat, a French financier of great wealth, and the first amateur and collector of works of art in Europe. The second acquaintance was no other than the afterwards notorious John Law, the inventor of the "system," the favourite of the Regent, and the proximate cause of unspeakable confusion and ruin to the finances of France. At the time when Rosalba first knew him, he was an outlaw who had fled from justice. He had made his escape from the prison in which he was confined for having killed a certain Mr. Wilson in a duel in London, and fled to the Continent. He seems to have been attracted to Venice by the opportunities which that city afforded for gambling speculations on a large scale. He kept a Pharaoh table, and seems to have prospered by it for a time.

Rosalba's acquaintance with him was afterwards renewed, as we shall see, in Paris, when he had reached the topmost height of his rocket-like course. After his fall he returned to Venice, where he died, and lies buried in the Church of San Moisè in that city.

A very different personage was Pierre Crozat. He, like the rest of the world, hastened on reaching Venice to visit Rosalba's studio, and, again like the rest of the world, was charmed with what he saw there. He appears not only to have been delighted with Rosalba's artistic skill, but to have conceived a real esteem for herself. He pressed

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the Venetian artist to visit Paris, where all the *beau monde* was prepared to pay her homage (there was no other *monde* worth mentioning but the *beau monde* in those days!), and he offered her the princely hospitality of his house, which was to be her home during her stay in France. Before leaving Venice he induced her to promise to accept his generous offer. It was, however, some time before this promise was fulfilled. In 1719, Andrea Carriera, Rosalba's father, died. It would seem as though his death removed an obstacle to the foreign journey, for in the following year it was undertaken and carried out.

In the month of March, 1720, Rosalba, with her mother, her two sisters, and her brother-in-law Pellegrini, who had by this time returned from Düsseldorf, set off for Paris, where she arrived in the April following, after having made a short stay at Lyons.

Rosalba, her mother, and her unmarried sister Giovanna, were all three the guests of the hospitable M. Crozat. The Pellegrinis lodged at an inn near the Hôtel Crozat.

From this time commences a diary kept by Rosalba during her stay in Paris. It consists of the merest jottings, dry memoranda of her daily employments, and so forth, and was never intended to meet other eyes than her own. But the diary falling into the hands of the worthy ecclesiastic Vianelli, Canon of the Cathedral of Chioggia, and an enthusiastic admirer of the talents of his countrywoman, he published it some years after her death.

Vianelli possessed a large mass of letters forming part of Rosalba's very extensive correspondence, and from this source he was enabled to furnish copious notes and explanations, which elucidate the brief memoranda contained in the diary. Other subsequent editors have carried the task of illustration still farther, so that the skeleton may be said to have had its dry bones re-clothed with flesh and blood. Read by the light of Vianelli's and Sensier's notes, the meagre little *libro di ricordi* furnishes a faithful picture of Rosalba's daily life in Paris, and affords strange glimpses of some of the frivolous, glittering, pleasure-seeking personages who filled it.

What a world it was into which the little grave-eyed Venetian was plunged! She reached Paris in the midst of the Regency, when the fever of Law's financial "system" was at its height. Everything seemed to partake of the kind of delirious agitation which this huge scheme of financial gambling infected society with. Fashion was not merely a mode, but a mania. There was neither moderation nor repose. People did not content themselves with admiring, they adored. They rushed to the Rue Quincampoix, enticed by the desire of gain, or to the Hôtel Crozat, attracted by the reputation of our Italian artist, with almost equal avidity and excitement.

The Court set the example of receiving Rosalba Carriera with the most flattering marks of distinction, and it may be said that all the

grand seigneurs of the day vied with each other in paying her homage. Louis XV.—then a child of about ten years old—was one of her first sitters. After the King, came the Prince de Conti, Mesdemoiselles de Charolois, de Clermont, de la Roche-sur-Yon, princesses of the royal family; the Duchess de Villeroi, the Countess d'Evreux, the Marchioness d'Alincourt, and all the great ladies of fashion. The Regent himself deigned to visit her studio, and Madame de Parabère and Madame de Prie figure on her list of visitors.

It is curious to see how much, and how little the influence of the age, and of the beings around her, acted upon the character of a woman like Rosalba Carriera. She was herself, in no cant or conventional sense of the word, a virtuous woman: earnest, industrious, modest, honest, and chaste, in the midst of a society to which, speaking broadly, the absolute reverse of all the foregoing epithets might not unjustly be applied. For although the wickedness of Paris under the Regency was doubtless *larger* and *louder* than in any other spot under the sun, it must not be supposed that the social corruptions of that epoch were confined to France. The pictures of life in Venice towards the close of the eighteenth century, which still remain limned by the hands of contemporary observers, are appalling in their cynical hideousness. Rosalba was no country mouse suddenly brought from rural seclusion into the whirl of a dissipated capital. She was a woman of forty-five years old, who had for a long time past lived in the world—and in the Venetian world!

Yet the steady simplicity of her nature appears to have resisted corruption as far as her conduct was concerned. With regard to her *opinions*, the case seems to have been otherwise. She was herself incapable of behaving in any relation of life after the manner of those great ones of the earth, against whom no spark of moral indignation seems ever to have been kindled in her breast. She accepts them as the most normal and natural manifestations of human nature, and is ready to praise the "princely virtues" and "noble sentiments" of such men as the Regent and Augustus III., King of Poland.

The Carriera family was surrounded with every luxury, and served with almost affectionate attention under the roof of the Parisian Mæcenas Pierre Crozat. A carriage was even placed at Rosalba's disposal. It is pleasant to find that host and guests remained on the most excellent terms with each other to the last, and that Rosalba behaved with perfect tact and discretion in a position which was not altogether an easy one.

Amongst the entries in the diary, is this characteristic one:—"June the 21st, I went to the King" (she was engaged in painting his portrait in pastel) "with a bad headache. Afterwards I saw the Duke," (the Maréchal de Villeroi, the King's governor,) "who took me by the hand and said, 'It must be very agreeable for you that the King is so patient!'"

Doubtless the King's "patience" was wonderful, but probably somewhat less than that of the poor artist resolutely setting to work in spite of her headache! Yet such was the tone of the times, and so much as a matter of course did people accept the doctrine that there was some peculiar divinity in kings, that the good Canon Vianelli, unable to restrain his admiration, exclaims in a note to this entry:—"It was, indeed, not a small thing that a great monarch, only ten years old, should have had the patience to remain quiet, *like the simplest of his subjects*, during the time necessary for taking his portrait." The italics are my own.

Such straws show the direction, and in some sort give the measure of rapidity, of the great current of public opinion which has swept over Europe within the last century. I believe it would now be almost impossible to find a writer to whom it would not be obvious that the words, "a great monarch *only ten years old*," involve an absurdity. Our standard of greatness, although still low enough, has certainly changed for the better!

One of Rosalba's earliest sitters in Paris was Law. She subsequently took the portraits of his wife, his son, and his daughter. In addition to the acquaintance she had made with Law in Venice, there was another link between him and the Carriera family at this time. Antonio Pellegrini had been commissioned by Law, in his quality of Contrôleur-Général des Finances, to paint the ceiling of a large saloon in the new bank, in fresco. This bank, called by a declaration of the King "*Banque Royale*," was the seat of those numerous and various financial operations of which Law was the ruling spirit. It was situated in a portion of the Palais Mazarin, and extended into the Rue Vivienne. Rosalba records that she visited the bank "*and the model*" on the 10th of June, 1720. This phrase Vianelli explains to mean the model, or first design, of Pellegrini's fresco, which was to decorate the great ceiling. It may be stated here that the fresco was executed in a wonderfully short space of time, and in Pellegrini's most dashing manner. The hall in which it was, was called *La Salle du Mississippi*, the origin of the name being that the great Compagnie d'Occident, established for the purpose of promoting the interests of the French colonies in America, joined itself to the Banque Royale, and had its seat in the same building. A description exists of Pellegrini's fresco in this famous Salle du Mississippi, which it would be too prolix to quote entire. But the reader may form some notion of the style of this work of art from the fact that "the principal idea of the painting was to express the different advantages of the Bank in such a manner as to make them set forth *the glory of the King and of Monseigneur the Regent!*" In the centre was the portrait of the King, little Louis XV., supported on one side by Religion, and on the other by a heroic figure representing the Regent. There were, moreover, Genius,

Commerce, Riches, Surety, and Credit! One wonders whether the latter (which must have been somewhat difficult to personify) was represented under the figure of John Law! Besides an infinity of other allegorical personages, there crowned the whole a huge Sun, in whose rays was basking a female figure typifying the Provinces of France, tranquilly enjoying the bounty of so serene a luminary; "that is to say"—I quote *verbatim*—"the sun is *the government*, which procures for the provinces all the advantages of commerce and peace by the counsels of a minister, filled with light and wisdom!" Alas!

By way of commentary on this fine farrago of Religion and the Regent, and Commerce and Credit, it should be known that swiftly as Pellegrini's brush moved, John Law's rocket-flight was swifter. The financier was ruined, disgraced, and forced to fly from France, before the fresco was quite finished; and Law, to the ocean of his debts, added the drop or two representing poor Pellegrini's claim for decorating the Salle du Mississippi! Later debtor and creditor met again in Venice; and there was a rumour that Law had managed to pay the painter a sum of twenty-five thousand francs. But the facts of the case will never be rightly known now. All that is certain is that Antonio Pellegrini, finding his debtor in Venice, took legal proceedings against him. Probably some compromise was effected. Be this as it may, the affair seems to have ended Rosalba's acquaintance with the family of Law, of whom no further mention is made in her letters or papers.

Our artist's career in Paris was one of uninterrupted success. Neither financial crises nor other national calamities damped the ardour of the aristocracy for portraits in pastel. The number of these which Rosalba executed during the year she passed in France is astonishing. In October, 1720, she was *unanimously* elected a member of the French Academy of Painting: an honour of which she seems to have been very sensible, and which she records in her diary with less parsimony of words than usual. The picture which, in accordance with established custom, she presented to the Academy on her election, represents a muse offering a laurel crown to the Academy of France, and still exists in a saloon of the Louvre. It was not executed, however, until after her return to Venice, and was forwarded to the Academy in 1722.

Rosalba was courted and flattered, not only by the *grandes dames* and *grands seigneurs* of the Court, but by almost every person of note, artistic, literary, or political, who was at that time to be found in Paris. Amongst others, she painted the portrait of the celebrated Watteau. She records in her diary that she was strongly urged to remain in Paris, but the brilliancy of her reception there, although it excited her profound gratitude, could not seduce her into abandoning her own country. Early in the year 1721 she took leave of her

French friends and admirers, and set forth for home. She travelled by way of Strasburg, avoiding the Marseilles route by reason of the fearful pestilence which had recently been raging there. She travelled through Suabia, and then entering the Tyrol, reached Venice from thence in the month of May. Her diary terminates with her sojourn in Paris.

Other honours were in store for her. In 1723 she was sent for to Modena, where she painted the portraits of six princesses of the reigning family, who loaded her with flattering attentions. But in 1730 she reached what her biographer, M. Sensier, calls the apogee of her success. In that year she went to Vienna by the express invitation of the Emperor Charles VI., who desired to have his portrait taken by the famous Venetian. The Canon Vianelli had access to a great number of letters written at this period by Rosalba and Giovanna (who always accompanied her sister) to their mother in Venice. The letters contain accounts of the artist's success at the Court of Vienna, where she executed portraits of the Emperor, the Empress, and the Archduchess, besides a number of other personages. Vianelli says that the correspondence is a "precious testimony to the kindness and attention which Rosalba received in the Austrian capital." But it is a precious testimony to something more—namely, to the simplicity, affection, and love of home, which characterised both the sisters.

They returned to Venice at the close of the year, and Rosalba does not appear to have quitted it again for any lengthened journey. She continued to work with her usual diligence, aided by Giovanna, whose assistance in preparing her first sketches, &c. was invaluable. Rosalba's "little house in Venice," as she designates it, was the rendezvous of Royalties and Highnesses, more or less serene, without end. One German prince after another undertook the journey to Venice expressly to obtain a portrait by her hands, and returned home proud and happy if he succeeded in doing so. The Duke of Mecklenburgh was a frequent visitor at her house, where he amused himself by playing the violin to her accompaniment on the harpsichord. Rosalba was herself no mean musician. She played several instruments—among them the violin,—and sang with much taste and expression.

One of the most marked of Rosalba's Royal patrons was Augustus the Third, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony. He became so enthusiastic an admirer of her talent, that he bought up her works at extravagant prices wheresoever he could find them. And the collection in the famous picture-gallery at Dresden attests to this day his zeal in obtaining specimens of her art. It has even been stated that Augustus did not confine his admiration to Rosalba's paintings, but was well inclined to extend his devotion to herself. He corresponded with her,—but so also did several other sovereign

princes,—and a collection of his letters to her certainly existed at one time. They were spoken of as “love letters,” and are now thought to be in Dresden, having been sold in a surreptitious manner. The truth or falsehood of this rumour might be worth ascertaining.

The remainder of the long life of our artist was devoid of any striking incident, although, did time and space “adhere,” there might be many curious details to be recorded of men and manners long since passed away. Rosalba survived her beloved sister Giovanna, whose loss was perhaps the deepest grief of her life. Giovanna’s character appears to have been very beautiful. With rare unselfishness she accepted a place in the shade beside her brilliant sister, in whose success she delighted, and whose labours she unobtrusively, but materially assisted. Although inferior to Rosalba as an artist, Giovanna appears to have been quite her equal in mother-wit. There are extant some sonnets which the sisters wrote one against the other as a playful trial of skill; and in the concluding one of the series (written in the Venetian dialect), Rosalba fairly yields the palm to her younger sister.

There was for a long time a legend current in Venice to the effect that Rosalba lost her reason, as well as her eyesight, before her death. But this is, happily, not true. Her last will and testament, of which a copy *in extenso* is given by Vianelli, suffices to prove that Rosalba’s mind and memory were clear and sound to the last. She left the enjoyment of her fortune to her sister Angela Carriera Pellegrini, (then a widow,) for life, and directed that it should be divided, in proportions which she carefully determines, after Angela’s death, between the families Pedrotti and Penzo, her relatives. She distributed various little *souvenirs* among her friends, and did not omit legacies to faithful servants. She had prepared a purse apart for the expenses of her funeral, which she directed her executors to see did not exceed the sum she had assigned for it.

One touching circumstance must not be omitted; she desired to be buried in the church of San Vito and San Modesto, near to, and if possible in the same tomb with her dearly beloved sister Giovanna. Her request was fulfilled, but the traveller in Venice will vainly seek the last resting-place of the two Carrieras. The church fell entirely into ruins. It has since been restored as far as the exterior is concerned, and it is said that the municipality of Venice intends to reconstruct and replace its broken tombs and monuments.

To sum up, we may own Rosalba Carrieras’s life to have been well and honourably filled. Although when once she entered on the path of success she encountered no obstacles such as have hindered the progress and wrung the hearts of greater artists, yet she had to undergo much preliminary toil and to exercise much steady perseverance before she emerged from poverty and obscurity. Her character

was doubtless stronger than her genius. But one is not tempted to expatiate on the exaggerated estimate in which her contemporaries held her talents, because she herself appears always to have preserved a modest opinion of them. That they were considerable, albeit not transcendent, the world has agreed to acknowledge.

Rosalba was subject all her life to fits of hypochondriacal depression; which, however, came at rare intervals. Now and again she records in her diary "A bad day." And this stands for a day of gloom and melancholy. But she seems to have suffered this affliction as she would doubtless have endured any bodily ailment, with a kind of common-sense stoicism, and to have troubled others with it as little as might be. In her old age the far greater misfortune befel her of total blindness. But even this did not cloud the serene light of her intelligence.

She expired in Venice on the 15th day of April, 1757, aged eighty-two, and she left behind her a memory fondly cherished by her friends and dependents, and untarnished by the breath of scandal in an age and country where such immunity was honourable in proportion to its rarity.

THE DEATH OF ALMACHILD.

SNOW-WHITE beneath the citron trees
The shining marble couches
Glassed globe and leaf; a little breeze
Was busy in the canopies,
And tinkled golden ouches
That held the scarlet to the frieze.

Outstretched at ease, each limb fulfilled
With sense of sleepy pleasure,
In idle strength lay Almachild,
Long, brown, and strong, a god in build,
A beast in spirit's measure,
As oxen lie by fields they tilled.

Through lids half-shut he saw the green,
The red, the white, the yellow,
He heard the rustle of the screen,
He saw her stepping down, his queen,
His bride without a fellow,
Slow-stepping down with eyes serene.

Dark eyes that entered into his,
Like-hidden by dark lashes;
Through all his body thrilled the bliss
That, born of sudden loveliness,
Flames out in greyest ashes,
The love that cursed of Heaven is.

And she came round the balcony,
And she came down the stair,
All clad in purple royally,
And crowned with ivy, entered she,
And all her plum-blue hair
Rolled round her white neck gloriously.

Upstart he all stark and glad,
Bewildered at that seeing,
He stood like Bacchus mute and mad
At sight of some much-loved Mænad;
A perfect pair in being
They seemed, as ever earth hath had.

And she came on, and nearer on,
 And kneit beside her master,
 In her raised hands a beaker shone,
 And she, as meek as any nun,
 The while his breath came faster,
 Spoke to the lord her craft had won :

" Behold, my lord, my life, my sweet !
 How sparkle rising bubbles
 Within this horn ; the noontide heat
 Is heavy on thee, it were meet
 Thy wife should ease thy troubles,
 So, Hebe, come I thee to greet

" With wine to cherish, spice of Ind
 To warm thee, winter's storing
 To cool, and waft thy wandering mind
 Back to those hills where native kind
 Still dwell, to rivers pouring
 Through icy vaults sea-life to find.

" Strong wine, and spice, and store of ice,
 And bride that woos the winning,
 I bring to thee, and nothing nice
 I offer all at thy devise ;
 I was not made for spinning,
 In life of man my living lies ! "

So raught he out his trembling hands
 To clutch the cup, and linger
 About the shining ivy bands,
 The while his strong life's golden sands
 Ebb'd out through eye and finger,
 Dragged by the tide no moon commands.

He drank, and paused to see his bride,
 No longer lowly kneeling,
 Stand in the shade, as one who spied
 His face, from eyes down-dropped to hide
 The gleam of triumph stealing
 To flushing cheek and lip's curled pride.

Snow-cold the draught, snow-cold and sweet,
 But all his heart grew colder,
 And all his brain took sudden heat ;
 As mountain cat had lent him feet,
 He gripped her shining shoulder—
 " Come, turn, my love ! thy lord to greet.

"Enough for me, enough for thee,
Is mingled in thy beaker ;
Ice for the vine of Lombardy—
Fire for the pine of Hungary—
And which of twain seems weaker,
The murdering vine or murdered tree?"

Then turned she with cold awful eyes,
And shook him off ; she towered
Most like some Fate that destinies
Had swayed, and knew a Fate arise
To quell her, and he cowered,
So much her mouth did might despise.

With twofold hands above her head
She waved the horn, she kissed it ;
She drained the draught, and stilly said,
"We twain have lived, and both are dead—
There was a life—I missed it !
What bitterer can be sung or said?"

Loud-ringing on the shining floor,
Came down the horn of sorrow ;
He gazed on her, and, sighing sore,
"Oh, love ! the dream of love is o'er,"
He said, "we wake to-morrow ;
How hast thou squandered all our store!"

So falling, clasped her feet and kissed,
And died, and she his passion
Nor recked nor pitied, for the mist
Rose to her eyes, the fountain hissed
In ear ; in queenly fashion
She wrapped her, fell, and no man wist.

B. MONTGOMERIE RANKING.

MEMOIRS OF A CYNIC.,
BY THE AUTHOR OF "CONTRASTS."

III.

My grandmother was so overwhelmed with grief at the loss of her son, that she resolved on relinquishing our superintendence. Possibly this determination was in part arrived at from the fact that my father had left his elder half-brother executor to his will, as well as our guardian. But little good feeling existed between him and my grandmother, he being the child of my grandfather's first wife, whom she had cordially detested. My uncle was considerably elder than my father, at least fourteen or fifteen years. I forget now what employment he held, but I think he was secretary in some office or bank, the business of which was carried on in the ground-floor, while we occupied the whole of the upper portion of the house. My uncle was a reserved, taciturn man, and very undemonstrative. He took personally but little notice of us, leaving us to the care of the housekeeper. If we received too much supervision from my grandmother, we certainly had little enough now. True, my uncle never treated us with any harshness, but seemed totally indifferent to anything connected with us, so long as we did not interfere with his comfort and convenience. He had been a widower for some years, and was childless, which possibly might, to a certain extent, account for the apathy with which he certainly regarded us.

We had no friends of our own age, and indeed the only acquaintance we had was the housekeeper. The locality we lived in was not one which allowed us much opportunity for out-door exercise. Our house was on the Surrey side of Blackfriars Bridge, standing some way apart from the high road, and has since been destroyed for the Blackfriars station of the Dover railway. The principal occupation we had at home was in a library of books (in other respects our education was utterly neglected); our greatest amusement was to go to the theatre, and we were always accompanied on these occasions by the housekeeper, for my uncle took no pleasure in theatrical performances.

Our life during the first six months we lived under my uncle's roof was peculiarly sad. My brother and I used to pass whole hours together in the back drawing-room, amusing ourselves with the books we there found; my uncle being either below in the office, or in some other part of the house. Among the books we especially delighted in were "The Pilgrim's Progress" and "Josephus." The former had

particular attractions for us, not only from the poetry of the book, but from the plates with which it was illustrated. Over and over again did my poor brother and I wade through that allegory, and so strong was the impression the book created, that even at the present time I can recall to mind the figures in the plates, as well as the quaint letters in the headings of some of the chapters.

One evening, after having been reading the whole afternoon in our favourite book, my brother and I when we closed it began to talk over the adventures it contained. Of course our favourite characters were Christian and Faithful. We cared little for Mr. Steadfast-in-the-Faith and other amiable personages, and despising with great earnestness Mr. Hold-to-the-World, Mr. Love-the-Flesh, Mrs. Bats'-Eyes, and other objectionable individuals. At last we came to Vanity Fair, and discoursed together for some time on the hubbub produced in it by the strange answer of Christian and Faithful. We began to consider what would be the effect in an English fair if they had passed through it replying to every person who said "What'll you buy? what'll you buy?"—"We buy the Truth." There was some difference of opinion between us on the subject, whether they would be ill-treated or otherwise. At last I suggested we should at once try the experiment. True, there was no fair handy, but a short distance from the northern side of the Bridge was old Fleet Market, which a few years afterwards was removed. It was then Saturday evening, the market was at the fullest, and consequently a good opportunity presented itself for the experiment to be tried. My poor brother and I left the house, it being determined that I should assume the part of Christian, and he that of Faithful.

As soon as we arrived at the market, we each adopted our characters, regulating our walk at a steady pace, and with a seriousness on our countenances befitting the occasion. "What'll you buy? what'll you buy?" was being said on all sides, and each time we heard it we replied, "We buy the Truth." Onwards we went, but so little notice was taken of us that I, at any rate, began to suspect that Christian's statement of the effects produced must have been somewhat exaggerated. At length a circumstance took place which gave us great encouragement. A butcher's man, who was sharpening his knife on the steel as we passed, said, "What'll you buy? what'll you buy?" We both answered steadily and solemnly, "We buy the Truth." The man seemed considerably annoyed, and was moving towards us when a customer came up to his stall, so he contented himself with merely calling us a couple of little fools. We were rather vexed at the customer interrupting the affair, but we considered it as hopeful, and went on.

Nothing occurred for a little time, when on passing one of the stalls the same question met our ears, and we returned the same

answer. An infidel greengrocer's-boy then threw a cabbage stump at me, which struck me so violently on the head it nearly knocked me down. Casting aside the meek and gentle character of Christian which I had assumed, I rushed at him, and a desperate fight ensued between us, in which, I must admit, I was far from coming off conqueror; on the contrary, I was very severely punished.

We now returned homewards, my face covered with blood. A singular change had also come over my demeanour. I no longer bought the "Truth," and, in fact, thought nothing more about it, being too much occupied with the blood which was trickling down on my dress, and fearing the animadversions which my uncle might make on the subject. Fortunately the streets of London were at that time by no means so well lighted as they are at present, so we excited very little attention on our road home.

The next day (Sunday), I found my nose was very considerably swollen, and I had also a black eye. Of course it was no use attempting to disguise it from my uncle, so when he asked me how it had occurred, I told him I had had a fight with a boy in Fleet Market the night before, and had got the worst of it. My uncle merely shrugged his shoulders, and the subject dropped. From that time I took a great dislike to "The Pilgrim's Progress," and I remember one afternoon, when my brother proposed we should read it, saying I was tired of it, and knew it all by heart. He gave, however, a shrewd guess at the truth, that it was the result of my fight, and not that I was actuated by any valid objection to the book. He endeavoured to console me, and remarked that on a future occasion I might be better able to keep my temper. I candidly admitted I was unable to support a character of the kind; and that I was sorry for it, but it was no use attempting it again. He argued that possibly mine was an exceptional case; and that in Bunyan's book nothing was said about cabbage stumps in Vanity Fair. However, I considered his argument as mere sophistry, and the matter dropped.

Although my uncle appeared to take no interest in the punishment I had received, I very much suspect it induced him to engage another housekeeper who would superintend us better, so that a mischance of the kind might not occur again. At any rate Martha came on duty a short time afterwards.

Our new superintendent was a good-natured, respectable woman, about forty years of age, and a relative of the one whose place she supplied, who was infirm and ill-tempered. Martha was very kind to us, and in our walks (for we were now prohibited to go out alone) she would take us anywhere we liked. As a proof of her good nature I may mention that our favourite walk was to Billingsgate; and it must be understood that Billingsgate presented a very different appearance then to what it does now. Altogether it would be impossible to imagine a more dirty or unattractive promenade. Whether we

crossed the bridge and went by Thames Street or through the dirty slums of Southwark, it was equally objectionable. When we arrived at the locality itself, those accustomed to the present cleanly condition of the place, and the noble buildings around it, could hardly form an opinion of the degraded state it was then in. There was an attribute, however, which in my eyes, redeemed it from all its other objectionable qualities—namely, a smell of tar, perceptible during the whole of the way, strongly suggestive of the sea, which increased in intensity till we reached Billingsgate, forming a fitting prelude to the bustling scene of boats, and the Gravesend and Margate packets, Billingsgate being at that time the embarking port for the latter. And it was here perhaps that I first conceived the strong desire, afterwards gratified, to become a sailor.

It was while under Martha's care that my feelings of romance experienced their first shock. However, unlike my experience of "*The Pilgrim's Progress*," the catastrophe, so far from curing me of my liking, has made the cause of it dear to me through the whole of my existence, even to the present day. It arose from my belief in the reality of theatrical illusions. At the time I am speaking of, I might have been between eight and nine years of age. Martha had some acquaintance with a person employed at the Surrey Theatre, and through his patronage she occasionally obtained orders for the pit, when my brother and I generally accompanied her.

One piece, which I saw several times, used to make a great impression on me. I forget the name of it, but it struck me as being exceedingly grand and magnificent, and its attraction rather increased than diminished the oftener I saw it. I even now remember the awe and admiration with which I used to regard the principal performers. One among them was to me an especial object of interest. She was the benevolent power of the piece—a just and magnificent queen. Her virtues, in my eyes, were very possibly increased by her personal appearance. She was a tall, portly, handsome woman, with a sweet clear voice. I remember also that she had a beautiful set of teeth; indeed she would not have been to blame had I forgotten the circumstance, for she took every possible opportunity of showing them to their fullest extent. No matter what sentence she might be giving utterance to, whether tragic or comic, laughing or weeping, jesting or scolding, her teeth were always to be seen. Her dress also contributed greatly to the respect I bore her, it was as magnificent as stage velvet and Dutch metal could make it, and the crown she wore the queen of the Indies might have envied.

The splendour and majesty of this woman fairly haunted me, till at last the illusion vanished. I was walking one fine sunshiny morning with Martha in a poor street at the back of the present Bethlem Hospital, which was then building. We were at the moment passing a row of small four-roomed houses, with little gardens in front,

separated from each other and the road by short, rickety wooden palings. From one of the houses emerged a tall shabbily-dressed old woman, with a basket on her arm. She took the same direction as ourselves, but, as we had not reached her when she left the garden-gate, we of course followed her. Suddenly the door of the same house opened again, and a slatternly, slipshod, dirty little girl rushed out of it after the old woman, screaming at the top of her voice, "Grandmother, we want butter." The old woman, hearing the child's voice, turned round, and I had a full view of her features. They were perfectly well known to me, but I could not at the moment remember where I had seen them.

"That's Mrs. B——, the queen in the piece you saw last night, at the theatre," Martha whispered to me.

I was thunderstruck. At first I believed it to be impossible; but a second glance at the poverty-struck creature proved it to be a fact. That shabby, sharp-voiced old woman was the mild-toned, magnificent queen of the evening before!

If the foregoing occurrence had not been sufficient to dispel some of my romance respecting theatrical representations, a circumstance afterwards occurred which fully confirmed it. It took place when I was between ten and eleven years of age. My uncle had placed me at a day-school in the neighbourhood, to which I went every morning and returned in the evening. My poor brother had now left me. He was exceedingly unwell, and had been placed under the charge of a respectable woman, a relative of Martha's, who resided at Hastings. I believe the happiest hours of my childhood were passed at that school; not that there was anything particularly attractive in my daily routine, but my life at home was exceedingly monotonous and solitary. At school, at any rate, I had companions; at home I had now none, with the exception of Martha, and a mongrel terrier of the name of Rover. My holidays were particularly desolate, for I had no acquaintances, my uncle not allowing me to receive any of my school-fellows at home; and I had too much pride to visit at the houses of others when I could not offer them any return.

Occasionally, it is true, I still had a treat to the theatre, Martha's acquaintance, of whom I have already spoken, continuing to hold his appointment, although the manager had removed him to the Lyceum Theatre. A piece was being performed there at that time which had great attractions for the public. It was called "The Dog of Montargis; or, The Forest of Bondy." It had such an effect on me that, although some fifty years have passed over my head since I saw it, I think I could now repeat everything which took place in it on the stage. Let me be clearly understood. The human performers in the piece did not possess the charm for me which would have been experienced by most boys of my age, for the broken illusion I have already mentioned had taught me how much deception was before

me. But there was one, in fact the hero of the piece, "The Dog of Montargis" himself, who entirely won my affections. With him there could be no deceit; all was nature there.

Another tie bound me to him: the strong affection I had for my own dog, Rover, the friend and playmate of my solitary hours. Somehow I identified the affection the dog on the stage, a superb Newfoundland, had for his master, with that of my own diminutive terrier. At the same time, the qualities of the "Dog of Montargis" far exceeded those of Rover. This I was obliged to admit, although my affection for my dog by no means diminished from the comparison. The instinct of the former was wonderful, if not miraculous. He appeared to surpass in intelligence all his biped fellow-actors, and the whole audience, from the applause they gave him, seemed to be of the same opinion.

The principal business of the piece rested on him. Returning home with his master through the forest, they were attacked by assassins. After a desperate struggle, in which both the dog and his master showed the greatest courage, the latter fell a victim to his assailants. The dog, finding his master slain, after giving vent to his feelings in a lamentable howl over the dead body, rushed from the stage. The next scene represented a street in Bondy. Although it was night, there was sufficient light on the stage to discern that the houses were arranged in such a manner that the doors of several were plainly seen in perspective. By the side of each door hung conspicuously a bell-handle.

Presently the dog made his appearance. In the darkness of the night the sagacious brute could not at first distinguish his home, and he examined two or three of the doors before he was assured that he was right. He then seized the bell-handle, and rang the bell vigorously. Presently a man-servant, hastily dressed, and with a lantern in his hand, opened the door. The moment he saw the dog he intuitively understood that something was wrong, and both servant and dog rushed across the stage together. It now appears to me he rather led the dog than that the dog led him; but this did not strike me at the time. The grand effect was in the last scene, where the dog appeared as the principal witness in the trial. Although suspicion was strong against the real assassin, he had contrived to get up an *alibi*, which, though his witnesses were disreputable, would, in all probability, have allowed him to escape, and thus frustrate the ends of justice; so on the dog was thrown the *onus* of discovering the truth.

The court was opened; the several accused were placed in a line on one side of the stage; and the judge, officials, and soldiers, were ranged on the other. The dog was then brought in, and he carefully examined the accused. The excitement of the audience at the moment was intense. All seemed breathless with expectation. Sud-

denly the dog sprang on the real villain, seized him by the throat, and dragged him down upon the stage. A terrific burst of applause was the reward the audience gave the intelligent brute for his sagacity and love for his master. The dog's owner, a Frenchman, then came forward and bowed the dog's acknowledgments for the compliment, the intelligent brute the while having his teeth fixed in the murderer's throat, apparently enjoying his vengeance. The Frenchman retired, and the business of the scene went on. The judge admitted the proof of the murderer's guilt, which had been made perfectly clear by the dog's evidence. "The finger of heaven," he said, "was evidently in the whole affair," and he concluded by ordering the villain to immediate execution. This, however, was not so easily performed, for when the soldiers advanced to take him away, it was with great difficulty they could remove the faithful brute from his throat. The young couple, whoever they might have been, for there were a pair of lovers somehow mixed up with the plot, were then and there, without let or hindrance, allowed to marry. They immediately placed themselves in a pious attitude, each with one hand on the head of the dog, the other raised towards the gallery evidently thanking the "gods" for their good fortune; and the curtain fell amidst the warm and unanimous plaudits of the audience.

I think I saw the piece three times, without its in the least palling on the senses. Each night after the performance was to me a sleepless one. It would have been absurd for me to have drawn any comparison between the dog's abilities and Rover's, with an idea of proving an approach to equality, yet my love for my dog burned as brightly as ever. At last I came to the conclusion that possibly Rover possessed as good natural abilities as his Thespian brother, and that education alone made the difference between them. I well knew how great the difference it made between men, and why should not the rule hold good with dogs?

After carefully thinking over the matter, and confirming myself in the idea, I determined, as Rover's natural guardian, to repair, as far as possible, the defects in his education. But an impediment arose at the very outset. Before I could teach Rover any points of canine accomplishments, I must be instructed in the art myself. This I resolved, if possible, to be; and I made Martha the confidante of my resolution. She, of course, could not advise me on the subject; but she promised to consult her theatrical friend. I waited with great anxiety the result of her interview with him, which at last took place.

She informed me that her friend had personally nothing to do with the stage arrangements, he being only a check-taker, but he would tell one of the carpenters, who understood all about it, and was a very good fellow, to call upon me. I waited impatiently for his visit; and at last he came. I laid open to him my wishes, and I told him how

happy I should be if Rover could be taught to be as intelligent and faithful as the dog of Montargis—did he think there was any chance of it—of course under proper instruction?

"I do," he said.

"Could you teach him, or instruct me how to teach him?" I inquired. "The latter I should prefer of the two."

"If your dog, sir," he said, "is a dog of ability, he can very easily be taught; but I hardly think it would be fair on my part to tell you how it is done. It is a sort of professional secret."

I admired his conscientiousness, but I disagreed with him in his conclusion. I asked him if he had pledged himself to secrecy. He assured me he had not.

"Then what objection can you have?" I asked. "You abuse no confidence, and disobey no order."

"That is all very true," he replied; "but still, I do not see my way."

He did not say he might not do it, as I, who knew better than he, thought the contrary. He said something about wishing to oblige me; but that in justice to his conscience, if he gave way out of good feeling for me, he ought at least to have some temptation to form a sort of excuse for his scruples.

I immediately understood him. My available assets at the time consisted of two shillings, and as he appeared a very honourably-disposed fellow, I thought they would go but a short way in calming the pangs of his conscience. I was, however, mistaken, for when I asked him what amount he would charge for each lesson or feat, he mentioned the moderate price of one shilling. I was delighted with his answer. I could now teach my dog the two most interesting tricks I saw the dog of Montargis perform; but, before agreeing to pay for them, I thought it would be but prudent if I introduced Rover to him, and obtained from him his candid opinion whether he considered my dog's natural abilities and qualifications sufficient to allow him to profit by the lesson. The carpenter thought it would be advisable, as it would be useless for me to pay for the lessons if the dog could not learn them, especially as "no money returned" was a strict rule in the theatrical profession.

Rover was accordingly introduced, and the carpenter examined him attentively and critically, while I stood by in a state of no little anxiety, waiting for his judgment.

"That dog will do capitally, sir," he said at last. "I never saw one—leastways judging from his appearance—who could learn faster. What a shame," he continued, in an under tone, "to starve a poor brute in that manner!"

I felt exceedingly annoyed at the remark, but, as it was a true one, I said nothing. The meanness of my uncle's house-keeping was visible in poor Rover's ribs, all of which might easily be counted. After a moment's silence on both sides, the carpenter said:

"Well, sir, is it a bargain? I am agreeable, if you are."

"It is," I said. "There is the shilling for the first trick."

"Which would you like to know, sir?" asked the man.

"How the dog of Montargis was taught to ring the right bell," I replied.

The carpenter put the shilling into his pocket.

"I will now tell you faithfully, sir, how it was done. I never gets off a bargain. All the bell-pulls in the street is made of wood except the one at his own house, and that's a sausage."

"A what?" I almost screamed.

"A sausage," he replied. "The poor brute knew his own house by the sausage for the bell-pull; and when he catches hold of it, he naturally rings the bell."

"Then I can't teach Rover to ring my bell?" I said.

"Oh yes, you could, sir," said the carpenter, "if you had a sausage tied to the wire; not otherwise. But then I don't know that your servants would much like it, for they would have to answer the door pretty often. There is not a dog within a mile round that wouldn't soon find it out, and have a pull at your bell to tell them his master was murdered."

I was thunderstruck at the information; but there was no help for it—the money was gone.

"I can't tell you anything more, sir, can I?" said the carpenter.

"No, thank you," I answered, in a somewhat melancholy tone.

The carpenter was preparing to leave the room, when the idea struck me that it would be a great satisfaction if Rover could be taught to detect any man that had murdered me (if that melancholy end should ever be my lot), and hand him over to the police. An act of retributive justice by the authorities for a crime of the kind would be cheap at a shilling. Even in a case of common assault, it might be useful if the magistrate would allow the dog's evidence to be taken. And even if a case of the kind had never yet occurred in an English court of law, it might be a precedent which afterwards might be acted upon in a manner most beneficial to the ends of justice.

"Stop one moment," I said to the carpenter. "I should like to know in what way the dog of Montargis was taught to detect the murderer of his master; or was it simply the effect of instinct?"

"Instinct be hanged," said the carpenter. "It was training, nothing but training; and I'll engage to make that dog of yours as well up in the way of doing it in a week as the other, every bit as well."

Without a moment's further hesitation I placed my other shilling in the carpenter's hand. He did not even condescend to thank me for it, but put it at once into his pocket.

"Well, sir, it is done in this way and no other," he said. "The

murderer has always a large piece of dog's meat sewed up in the buzzim of his shirt, and so the dog always knows him in whatever part of the stage he may be, and pins him accordingly."

I stared at the man in utter astonishment.

"But do you mean to say he could not detect him without the dog's meat?" I asked.

"Certainly not, sir," he said. "Dogs is like Christians; they must have something to know a villain by; they can't guess it no more than you. It would lead to all sorts of mischief if they could. No, sir, depend upon it, a poor half-starved brute like your dog would be far more certain to detect your murderer by the dog's meat than by any other means; it's natural to him."

The carpenter then left me. I endeavoured, but with scant success, to consider the increase of respect I had for Rover, on finding his natural abilities not inferior to those of the dog of Montargis, as an equivalent for the two shillings I had paid for my folly.

IV.

My life passed at my uncle's in the same melancholy routine for some eighteen months after Martha's arrival. I received neither kindness nor unkindness from him; my relations with him were of a perfectly neutral character. I had nothing for which to be grateful to him, nor had I the slightest reason to object to any treatment I received. When he saw me, which was perhaps once a day, he would address a few words to me in a civil tone, but seemed utterly indifferent to my reply, even, indeed, if he heard it at all. In his housekeeping nothing absolutely necessary for my comfort was wanting, but there was never the slightest superfluity of any kind. So strict was he in household expenses, and so determined that no waste should take place, that at last he positively banished my poor dog Rover. What was the immediate cause of this severe act of his I do not know; but I am half inclined to think that some one had told him of the lessons I had received respecting Rover's education from the stage-carpenter, and my uncle very possibly calculated that if I instructed Rover on the same system, it might have an injurious effect on his larder. Possibly it might have arisen from a pecuniary cause, for about that time the dog-tax must have been first imposed, and thus Rover's existence was brought by the tax-gatherer more directly under the notice of my uncle.

And now occurred to me a really great sorrow, the greatest I had met with since the death of my father. I mentioned in the last chapter that my brother, in consequence of ill health, had been sent to the house of a relative of Martha's, who resided at Hastings. The change of air at first benefited him considerably, and we received most favourable reports of the progress he was making. A change then took place. In consequence of a severe cold he had caught,

medical assistance had to be called in, and, although the symptoms were for a short time ameliorated, he never thoroughly recovered from the shock. At last consumption set in, which ran the usual course,—the reports we received one day raising our hopes, and the next crushing them again to a point below the one they had stood at before receiving the last favourable intelligence. At length he died somewhat suddenly, and I was sent down in company with Martha to attend the funeral. We arrived the evening before the ceremony, and the next morning I was shown my poor brother in his coffin. Even now, by closing my eyes, I can paint the scene as vividly on the retina as the moment it occurred. I can see the pale wax-work look of his countenance, with the calm expression of death on it, as well as the coffin and all the appurtenances in the room. One thing especially deserves mentioning. The woman with whom he had lived had filled the coffin with flowers. It was the custom, she said, in the part of the world she came from, Hampshire, to place flowers in the coffins of children. If this really was the case, it would be singular to trace the source from which this beautiful custom had arisen. To search for its origin would be a curious task, and one, in my opinion, infinitely more attractive than any of the researches into the funereal customs of nations I have ever yet met with.

The funeral over, I returned with Martha to London, where I continued to reside in the same house with my uncle some six months longer. And then, for some reason with which I am not acquainted, the office was closed, and my uncle left the house to reside in a much smaller one in one of the new streets then building in Lambeth. I know not if he lost any money at the time, but I remember he was exceedingly low-spirited, and that, moderate as had been his house-keeping before, he now reduced it considerably. Nay, more, he even dismissed Martha, and sent me to a cheap boarding-school in the country. As a rule, my time here did not pass uncomfortably. There were a great many boys, so that I had plenty of amusement. The progress I made in my studies would hardly, in the present day, be called satisfactory, though this is not to be wondered at, as we had but one master to every forty scholars.

At the termination of the first half-year I received a note from my uncle, informing me that I was not to return for the holidays, but that he had made arrangements for me to reside during the time with the schoolmaster. This arrangement I had no objection to, especially as during the vacation we had no lessons to learn, and several other pupils also remained at school, principally those whose parents were abroad, many of them living in India.

Another six months passed on, and it was again arranged for me to spend my holidays at school. I was even more satisfied with the arrangement than on the former occasion. It was then Christmas, and we were all to a considerable extent confined to the house ; now,

on the contrary, it was summer, and the weather beautiful, and the three or four companions who remained with me were nice, intelligent, gentlemanly lads, and we used to amuse ourselves in the fields and country around, without any supervision of the masters, during the whole of the day. And now first occurred to me a proof of the old proverb, that "When the devil finds a man idle, he generally puts a job into his hands." It was so in my case. I don't know whether it was from the beauty of the weather, or what could have been the cause of it, but it was now that I felt my first experience of the tender passion. I managed in some manner to fall desperately in love with a little girl about my own age, the daughter of the matron of the workhouse, and a very stiff, prim, severe woman she was. How her daughter first came under my notice I know not. Certainly it was not in the general manner these affections start up in the breasts of schoolboys, by first seeing the beloved object in church, for her mother was a rigid dissenter, and we, of course, from our more genteel position in society, attended the parish church. I never spoke one word to her in my life ; but it was no matter, my affection for her surpassed the bounds of reason. My love grew so strong, I could conceal it no longer, and I determined to address her. But how ? To speak to her was impossible, as of course I could not get a moment with her by myself. At last I consulted my great crony at school, an Indian boy, what steps he would advise me to take.

"Write to her," he said. "Nothing has so fine an effect on the mind of a girl as a well-written letter."

I should here mention that he had gained the prize for penmanship and English composition during the last half year.

I determined to adopt his advice, and we sat down together to concoct the letter. It is only justice to him to state that he was far more fluent in the matter than I was, although I was to receive the whole credit of the production. It was certainly a beautiful piece of composition, and had a great effect on me. One sentence is still fresh in my memory. It ran thus :—"When through the guardian watchfulness of friends, the sweet employ of epistolary converse is destroyed, still shall the beauty of that form, and enchantments of that mind, remain impressed on my susceptible heart."

Altogether the letter was a master-piece. "If she can resist that," I said, as I folded it up, "she must be more than mortal."

I had now to find a messenger. That was a work of little difficulty, for the shoe-boy of the school, I knew perfectly well, would run any risk in my behalf, provided I remunerated him for the danger he incurred. He did so in the present instance ; and for the sum of threepence, my week's pocket-money, he agreed to take the letter, as well as find the means of placing it in her hands. It was the afternoon when he started on his mission, and it was dark night before he returned home, I anxiously expecting him the while.

When he arrived, he told me he had been completely successful, and had induced a pauper nurse with whom he was acquainted to put the letter on my love's pillow, where she would be sure to find it when she went to bed. I must say I felt somewhat annoyed that he had not brought back an answer with him, so that I might judge what my fate would be. However, there was no help for it, and as I knew I could not receive any answer before the next day, I went to my own bed, and, after some hours, fell asleep. My anxiety the next morning about the fate of the letter was so great, that I was unable to eat any breakfast, a fact which the master did not notice, and it is more than probable he would have felt but little interest in it had he done so. Breakfast being over, I tried to amuse myself in the playground, and while away the time as best I could ; but it was impossible, and I anxiously watched every ring at the bell, hoping it would bring me some message from my beloved. No such good fortune, however, attended me, till about two hours after dinner, when I was told that the head master wanted me in the parlour. Somewhat puzzled to know what he could want with me, I hastened into the room, and there, to my surprise, I not only found him,—holding in one hand an open letter, and in the other a cane,—but the matron of the workhouse and her daughter as well.

I was so puzzled and bewildered at the sight, that my heart fluttered audibly, and I remained breathless in presence of the three. It was but a short time however, for the master, still holding the letter in his hand, asked me if I were the author of it. I boldly replied that I was, and then gave a glance at my loved one to see the effect my answer had made on her. It was far from encouraging. There was a stern, chaste expression on her countenance which chilled me to the marrow ; while on that of her mother was a frown so ominous that the boldest female pauper in the workhouse would have trembled beneath it.

"Did any one assist you in writing this letter?" inquired the master.

"I refuse to answer your question," I replied. "I acknowledge myself to blame in the matter, and that is sufficient for you."

"I admit it," said the master, and seizing me by the collar he immediately commenced giving me a most severe caning.

I took my punishment manfully, nor did I utter a single cry during the whole of the time. I am not altogether certain that I even felt the blows, so painful to my mind was the derogatory position I was in, and that too in the presence of the object of my affections, who calmly stood by without even an expression of sympathy on her countenance. When the master had finished the punishment, he thrust me out of the room, telling me I was "a young reprobate." I turned round with the intention of telling him the statement was false, and that my intentions were pure and honourable, when a glance at the countenance of the young lady stopped me, so strongly

was the expression of contempt marked on it. To say the truth I was afterwards not altogether sorry for it, as it completely erased in my breast all esteem and affection for her, and instead of the amiable, lovely creature I imagined her to be, my last reminiscence of her was that of a disagreeable little vixen.

The punishment I had received, however, made a most painful impression on me. I now cared nothing more for the damsel, but the remembrance of the disgraceful treatment I had received in her presence galled me almost to madness. I determined to remain no longer at school, and wrote to my uncle candidly, telling him the whole of the circumstances of the case, and requesting he would remove me. He wrote back a reply, ordering me to stay where I was. A fortnight afterwards, as soon as my pocket-money was sufficient to pay the postage, I sent him another letter, saying, that if he did not remove me at once, I would run away and get the captain of some ship to take me as cabin-boy. This letter had the desired effect. My uncle came down himself to the school two days afterwards, and having paid the bill, without any animadversion or blame, took me back to London with him, and without saying, I believe, half-a-dozen words on the way. During the next few days I remained at his house, but as we only met at meal-times, little conversation passed between us. He did not appear at all angry with me, nor did he make any remarks respecting my behaviour, but seemed simply to ignore my presence.

This routine continued for about a week, when my uncle informed me he intended to send me to a school at Clapham, one of a much better description than that I had just left. All the pupils were sons of gentlemen of fortune or professional men, whereas at the other school there was a great mixture of classes. At this school I remained till I was past sixteen, and I lived there all the year round, holidays as well. I think during the whole of the time I did not see my uncle more than twice. I had a more liberal supply of pocket-money, and the comforts of the school were in every degree vastly superior to the one I had lately left. During the time I was at Clapham I suffered another attack of the tender passion, but this time of a totally different description to the last. Instead of falling in love with a girl as young as myself (I may here add that since my adventure with the daughter of the matron of the workhouse I cordially detested all little girls), the present object of my affections had been fifty, but how many years before it would be difficult to say. She occupied the honourable position of laundry-maid to the establishment, and with her I fell desperately in love. It would be base flattery to say she was handsome; on the contrary, beyond a good-natured expression of countenance, there was but one attraction about her; but that, in my eyes, compensated for any other defects, assuming there to have been any—she was much older than myself.

I seemed to hold it as a chivalrous feat to captivate the affections of a woman so much my senior ; it made me feel more manly, and more on an equality with her. I will not exactly say she encouraged me, for that might be doing her an injustice ; but certainly she did not discourage my attentions, and received graciously the buns and other delicacies I purchased for her. If, however, I became at all too demonstrative, she used to threaten to tell the Doctor, but, to do her justice, she never kept her word. This innocent flirtation continued till I left school, when, on parting with her in the laundry, I clasped her in my arms and kissed her affectionately. The tears came into her eyes, and I thought I had offended her, so I begged her pardon and wished her good-bye, telling her she would ever be dear to me, to which she made no reply.

For some weeks after I left school I resided with my uncle, who allowed me to do exactly as I liked. The principal portion of each day I spent with a school-fellow who had left school about twelve months before, and lived in the neighbourhood of the East India Docks, and whose father held some lucrative appointment connected with the shipping, but of what description I am unable to say. Certain it is that I there acquired my love for a sea life. I used, in company with my friend, to visit the officers of the different East-Indiamen which were then in the Docks. My mind became excited with the different adventures they had passed through, and the very great men they considered themselves when once to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope. It must be remembered, however, that in those days the captains of the East India Company's ships, especially those engaged in the China trade, held a very different position in the minds of the public from what they do at present, though I had afterwards good reason to know that the superiority they claimed, was due rather to the exclusive power possessed by the Company's charter, than to any real merits on their part as seamen, officers, or gentlemen. However, the different narratives I heard inspired me with an intense love for a sailor's life, and I determined to become one. I now attempted to summon up courage to speak to my uncle on the subject, but he saved me the trouble by one morning asking me if I had formed any idea what profession or business I should like to enter.

"It is quite time," he continued, "that you should entertain the matter seriously."

"Well, uncle," I replied, "I should, if possible, like to get an appointment as midshipman in the Honourable East India Company's service."

"As far as I am concerned I have not the least objection to your entering the East India Company's service ; the only impediment I see in your way is that I have not the slightest interest with any one who could obtain for you an appointment of the kind. Don't you

think the navy would suit you better? I am distantly acquainted with some who are in authority there; and might possibly be able to advance your interests with them."

"Thank you, uncle," I said, "but had it been a time of war I should have preferred it; in peace, there is so little doing in the navy it would not have the same attraction for me as the East India Company's service, where I should be continually moving about, and seeing a great deal of the manners and customs of foreign nations."

My uncle made a slight grimace, evidently at the idea of the amount of information I should receive as to the manners and customs of other nations. He said nothing on the point, however, and merely reminded me again that he had no interest in the service.

I asked if he had any objection to my applying to my friend Burton on the subject. "His father," I said, "knows a good many of the captains of the East Indiamen, and as he has shown me a great deal of attention, I think it very probable he might obtain an appointment for me."

"Ask him if you please," said my uncle, yawning, "and when you have his answer, let me know the result."

I promised I would do so, and the conversation dropped.

(To be continued.)

"DIANE DE LYS" AT THE PRINCESS'S THEATRE.

IN a recent paper in this magazine, an accomplished lady-contributor divided the visitors to the theatre (as it now exists) into certain classes, but her classification, though good, was not perhaps exhaustive. I say, perhaps, because it may be the case that I am one absolutely solitary instance; but probably there is after all a class of persons, however small, who sometimes go to the theatre, as I have often done, for sheer distraction: in order to put a solid barrier of vivid sensuous impressions between two different kinds of labour; in order to get thoroughly tired out and force the sleep that otherwise will not come; in order to get a good sound horse-laugh out of some broad bit of farce; or for all these purposes put together. It was, however, a feeling of genuine artistic curiosity that took me the other night to the Princess's Theatre to see the acting of Madlle. Desclée in the *Diane de Lys* of Alexandre Dumas, of *Dame aux Camélias* and *Tue-la!* celebrity—a fellow whom I so thoroughly detest, that nothing but a strong motive would ever have taken me to witness any piece the text of which came from his brutal paws. Madlle. Desclée charmed me so much, that I went a second time to see the same piece when performed for the lady's benefit. There was a crowded house, and the Prince and Princess of Wales, with another prince, and, I believe, another princess, were present. The Heir-apparent applauded heartily, and the lovers of paradox were at liberty to enjoy the puzzle that was thus put before them. The Lord Chamberlain at first interdicts a play because it is immoral. The Lord Chamberlain then withdraws the interdiction, although the grounds upon which a play is shut out ought, one would say, to be so clear that no decision could ever bear a revisal. And then the younger members of the Royal Family of England go to witness the piece. Lord Sydney acted in this case as keeper of the consciences of a great many English youths and girls besides; for the audience was very miscellaneous, and included young ladies of bread-and-butter age come to pick up ideas about French manners and accent. If you ask me whether they got good or harm, I answer, Neither in any appreciable degree. Critics write about English young ladies as if they never read anything. But does the intelligent middle-class Englishman as a rule lock up his Bohn's Libraries? Are there no perfectly pure young ladies who have read Wilhelm Meister, the Elective Affinities, or Chatterton, or Sterne's Sentimental Journey, and even dipped for a minute into Boccaccio's Decameron? Candidly,

I am quite sure these things are chips in porridge. Somebody must know them ; and to go out of the way to hide them up is idle stupidity.

Those who have happened to read many pages of mine know well that I think the Lord Chamberlain a mediæval absurdity, with a function that cannot be justified by any sane political philosophy. But it does not follow that we should be hard upon him. So long as he has to exercise that function, let us recognize its difficulty. He has to be guided not only by his own ideas of what is right but by other people's, since what is allowable as a question of "public morals" (—I put the phrase in commas as a mark of contempt, not believing in anything of the kind—) is very largely a question of the *impression* certain things make under given conditions of use and wont. And here any such officer as Lord Sydney has, and must always have, a most difficult part to play—indeed an impossible part, and one which may be taken as the *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole thing. While he is there he must do his best ; but how ludicrously persons differ in their notions of what is moral in its effect, what is modest, and what is "proper," any intelligent and candid person who will think a little must know. I was present when Mr. W. Bodham Donne, the accomplished and highly intelligent Examiner of Plays, was examined before the Theatrical Committee of 1866 ; and the questions that man had to answer were enough to pose a college of Seraphic Doctors, instructed by Aldrich himself. The tax-gatherer uncle in Nicholas Nickleby—I forget his name—asks Nicholas, "Pray, sir, do you consider the French a *cheerful* language?" and just such a question did Lord Eustace Cecil put to Mr. Donne. I can see him now, cocking his head, like my magpie, as he let off this droll pistol-shot : "Do you consider the story of *Faust* a moral story?" Mr. Donne looked down his nose, and after a slight pause, and with a *nuance* of surprise in his accent, said, "The—ah—story of *Faust* is—ah—a *world* story." What else could he say? To another similar question, the exact terms of which I forget, the same ingenious gentleman replied : "The morality of the stage is—ah—is the morality of the stage." The reader whispers with Dogberry, "A marvellous witty fellow !" and the reader is right. I do not think stage managers or others concerned would get much change out of Lord Sydney's department if Mr. Donne did all the work.

The opinions I have to give are those of a perfectly "emancipated," and, I hope, a perfectly candid person ; who is bound to no "line" of criticism ; who cares nothing for producing a "sensation" by "pitching into" anything ; who has, in fact, not the faintest shadow of inclination to write up to any particular view of the subject, moral, literary, or dramatic.

Rose Chéry, the predecessor of Madlle. Desclée in the part of the Diane de Lys, I never saw ; with Madlle. Desclée I was inexpressibly

charmed, but a degree of coarseness in her laugh, and her want of intensity, sometimes broke the spell of her otherwise perfect acting. It must, however, be borne in mind, in justice to her, that I am ignorant of French manners except so far as I infer or "realise" them, and that I have no means of comparing her with any other actress in such a part. I tried in vain to conceive Mrs. Stirling, or Miss Terry (now Mrs. Lewis), or Miss Wilton as Diane de Lys. There is no modern English play of any such order,—I think we may say no English play of any age that resembles this French comedy, in its mixture of bastard earnestness and bastard levity. In judging, however, of its cynicism, which is extreme, and what to English eyes and ears is its indelicacy, we must not fail to place ourselves at the French point of view,—remembering, as we do so, that we are not necessarily lowering any moral standard of our own. Much depends upon the suggestiveness both of language and incident, and that is matter of use. This can be brought home to us in a moment. The words birth, death, marriage, convey as much information as a chapter on physiology, but the most modest young lady does not hesitate to use them. And when we find a young painter closeted with a countess for the first time, suddenly hidden away in her chamber to avoid a scandal, and then telling her, in a neat moral lecture, on being let out, that the world will be sure to maintain "qu'un homme caché le nuit dans la chambre d'une femme a bien des droits sur cette femme," we must remember that the words do not to a French ear carry the force they would carry to an English ear. One instance may serve for a hundred. It may very well be contended that the Lord Chamberlain every day licenses plays that are as immoral as *Diane de Lys*, though very different in character. I know of one very successful piece that I consider quite as cynical. But no modern English play puts certain situations so openly before the footlights as *Diane de Lys* does. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu puts the central situation into verse with her usual frankness:—

"Has love no pleasures free from guilt or fear?
Pleasures less fierce, more lasting, more sincere?
Thus let us gently kiss and fondly gaze,
Love is a child, and like a child he plays.
O Strephon, if you would continue just,
If love be something more"

She paus'd, and fix'd her eyes upon her fan!
He took a pinch of snuff, and thus began:
"Madam, if love——" but he could say no more,
For mademoiselle came rapping at the door.
The dangerous moments no adieus afford;
"Begone," she cries, "I'm sure I hear my lord."
The lover starts from his unfinished loves,
To snatch his hat, and seek his scatter'd gloves:

The sighing dame to meet her dear prepares,
While Strephon, cursing, slips down the back-stairs.

But the loves of this Strephon and Chloe are wanting in the kind of elevation that belongs to those of Madame la Comtesse de Lys and the poor painter Paul Aubry; and they are introduced only to be made game of. In *Diane de Lys*, all the petty intrigue of the story is acted out under your eyes; the persons concerned tell lies on the instant with the most gracious facility; and the lovers do their courting in your presence. In England, when matters of this sort are just grazed by the dialogue or the action, it is usually in such a way that the "lover" is made ridiculous. True, the moral spirit of the thing is sure to be conventional—it is to the German stage that we must look for a little occasional simplicity and sincerity—but when Benedick for instance epiloguises that "there is no staff more reverend than one tipp'd with horn," are there five husbands in an audience of as many thousands of persons who are made uneasy?

The story of *Diane de Lys* is something very different indeed from what is usual in English plays of temptation. In France, whatever may be said, and with much truth, about the interior domestic life of the people, it is certain, unless their whole literature lies, that the sentiment of conjugal fidelity is not as general as it is in our own country. We find this not only in the literature of intrigue and persiflage, but in writings that have an avowed ethical purpose. Take the "*L'Amour*" of M. Michelet. "*Resserrer le foyer*" is the motto of the book, and its whole object is to glorify marriage. Yet what do we find? That the wife will be tempted comes as quite a natural assumption, and there are one or two chapters devoted to the regimen which the husband is to apply in case the spider gets the fly into the web. He is to treat her kindly; he is to take her away from the scene of action; he is to handle her as an almost irresponsible being; in case of need he is to apply a slight personal chastisement—a subject which is dealt with in terms truly ludicrous. On the other hand it is almost as certainly assumed that "*la begueulerie des femmes*" must, after a few years of marriage, send the husband from home to "*la dame entretenue*." And what have we in *Diane de Lys*? I have not read the novel, but the play was, as Mr. Carlyle says, "thus and not otherwise." A charming girl—an heiress—bred in a convent school, marries at about eighteen, a man of five-and-thirty, who is up to his neck in public business, but who continues after his marriage "*sa vie de garçon*." We gather that he is not faithful to his wife, though he treats her as a gentleman should, and allows her to spend her own money pretty much as she pleases. As to the company the lady keeps at home, M. le Comte is not quite as indifferent as the shopkeeper in *Sterne*, but he is nearly. "*Monsieur is so good*," says the wife, "as to give

himself the trouble of feeling my pulse." The husband lifts his hat, and goes out, saying, "Monsieur does me too much honour." M. le Comte de Lys has, however, a sister, a certain Marquise, who keeps a sharp watch over his wife, and repeats to him from time to time anything noticeable in her conduct. The young countess, leading a tame and "neglected" life, is easily tempted into any small excitement, and the number of "amants," or rather possible "amants,"—pretenders to her love,—is incredible. The words "amour" and "amant" are bandied about like marbles in the dialogue of the piece. At last a certain "étourdi" (though he is not, I think called by that name, and is more than "étourdi,") who had courted her when she was at school, writes and asks her to meet him one evening at a certain place. This is the "atelier" of a young painter,—of course. The lady has herself "a taste,"—"elle est artiste, spirituelle"—and, in company with a lady friend, she goes and sees her old lover. Him she gaily puts aside; but he, fond of mischief, and an amateur in "spooning," must needs introduce her to the young artiste,—"*ce Paul Aubry*." The rest is simple. In less than half no time, it is, "*Sachez que je n'ai jamais aimé que vous!*" It is all within bounds; the story goes no further, so far as I can make out, than the final episode in Mr. Froude's "*Nemesis of Faith*" (which comes handy to my pen because I have just read it for the first time in my life); but society takes alarm. Diane sets her back up, and takes "*ce jeune artiste*" boldly under her wing. Hence, scandals, complications, jealousies, and the one good thing said in the whole play,—which is to the effect that society will never forgive you for a great joy which makes you shun "company." However, the terrible Marquise alarms her brother. M. le Comte dashes upon the scene, and insists upon carrying the lady off from Paris in a way which, all things considered, is an outrage. "*Ce pauvre Paul Aubry*" has clearly whatever rights over Diane de Lys a sincere attachment can give him; but the Count has clearly none. He is a polite ruffian accidentally chained to a woman who is ten times too good for him; and when, having discovered that his young wife can excite other men to earnest passion, he returns from his diplomacy and his dissipation to offer his "love," he is, at least, as great a criminal as "*ce Paul Aubry*."—I mean, measured by any standard whatever; my own standard I decline to bring into court. Well, there is a scandal, and "un éloignement," during which "*ce Paul Aubry*" is, of course, very bad; according to the usual formula, "*il est souffrant*." M. le Comte, having once surprised him with his wife—and *after* this, the high-minded husband goes on making love to her!—tells him he shall not condescend to notice him, except by means of a pistol shot, the next time he catches him with poor Diane. "*Ce Paul Aubry*" runs after him everywhere in order to provoke him to a duel; but the "bloated aristocrat" declines to recognise him until the hour has struck. With-

out much trouble he tracks him to his wife's company, and then shoots him on the very coolest *Tue-le* principles. "Ce Paul Aubry" dies game, and it appears that he really loves Diane, and she him. "Vivant, à moi, mort, à ma mémoire!" says he (I have not the play before me), and she falls fainting on his corpse when he falls. In answer to the inquiries of sudden visitors, the Count explains the situation very simply: "C'est que cet homme était l'amant de ma femme et que je l'ai tué."—Curtain.

Among the minor characters of the play is a sort of inferior Warrington, who is pretty well sketched and was well acted. One or two other parts were also well filled—but it was difficult to make much of such an empty piece of work. Take out Rose Chéry, or Mademoiselle Desclée, and there was nothing worth crossing the road for. The writing does not contain one notable stroke of wit or humour; or one original line of writing that deserves notice. The first scene, in which two ladies ransack a young painter's studio and turn out the boots and gloves of the "model" *Aurore*, and read the painter's love-letters, (at least Diane does, much rebuked by her married friend, *Marceline*,) may have been original in conception; it was certainly amusing. But in order to be effective, the moral pitch of such a story must be much higher or much lower. As it is, you neither laugh nor cry, and you feel something like contempt for the whole lot when the curtain falls. Their facility in lying—even the good *Marceline* lies, though it is for "virtue,"—is something marvellous. "Voilà un noble cœur!" exclaims Diane, after her first interview with Paul Aubrey—but in the next scene or near it, this noble young man is playing tricks of petty deception worthy of a naughty school-boy.

On the whole, in spite of the fuss made about this piece between the Lord Chamberlain and the press, it is perfectly fair to say that it was a mere chip in porridge, and that the fact of the fuss points to only two things which are of much importance to us English:—the unworkableness of Lord Sydney's function; and the insincerity and inconsequence of English public opinion in questions of morals. The facility with which it gets upon its high horse—winking all the while at the Sons of Belial behind—is no new topic of mine, but it would be silly to waste powder and shot upon it now. I fear this is rather a flippant little sketch; but the accent of scorn *will* intrude when I speak of such stuff at all.

MATTHEW BROWNE.

MR. CARINGTON.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONSTERNATION IN TWO CITIES.

- Astrologos.* One city we call Genesis, one Exodus :
There is a city we call Deuteronomy.
Raphael. That's Edinboro' : tell me which the others are.
Astrologos. The town of thoughts strong birth . . . the town of exoduses.
The Comedy of Dreams.

ENTERED the Earl of Delamere to the Diana Chamber, looking as young as if he had dropt a half-century somewhere in the corridor, and cared too little about it to offer a reward for its recovery. Men there are who, to use the Scripture phrase, renew their youth like eagles ; and here in his wild Lakeland eyry, held by many a strong, swift ancestor, the eagle spirit became visible in Delamere. The long fogginess of London life was blown away by these wild winds of the fells ; the mountains and meres reclaimed him from the clubs and hells ; no longer was he the London gamester and dandy, but Delamere of Delamere.

To the Marchesa Ravioli Delamere was polite in that fine old-fangled style which has almost perished in the presence of modern freedom and ease. I must, for my poor part, vote for the continuance of homage from man to woman ; it is the natural deference of strength to beauty, of daring to purity, of glory to gaiety, of life to love. There is no creature more contemptible than the fellow who is rude to a woman. Mind, it is quite clear that a man's duty is to control his wife, and to keep his daughters in good order, by such physical and mental methods as he can command ; but it is also his duty, and will (if he is not a fool) be his pleasure, to treat with chivalrous courtesy the smallest doll in petticoats, thereby teaching her that she is born a lady. Never too soon can a girl be taught that she is a lady, or a boy a gentleman : teach them to obey, by all means, but teach them to respect themselves. Courtesy, chivalry, charity . . . that is my triad. When the trinity of human existence is perfect, these three are one.

"I am delighted to meet you," said the Earl to the piquant little Ravioli, who had risen from her sofa in honour of the mansion's master ; "Carington has described you as the loveliest woman in Europe, and I have never known Carington, as to the charm of

ladies, make a mistake. I would trust him to choose me a wife, if I wanted one."

"Thank you for your confidence," said Mr. Carington, "but I would much rather not attempt it. A man who has never found a wife for himself can hardly be expected to help a friend in such a ticklish business."

"You will remain here as long as you please," said the Earl to the Ravioli, with whose pretty piquant style he was quite in love already. "Carington will see you are comfortable. I am a dull, old invalid, and shall ask to be admitted now and then only."

"Now you remind me," said Raffaella, "of a strange old song I learned in my youth, the work of a troubadour or minnesinger. I think they said it was Walter of the Bird-Meadow."

"Sing your old song, Raffaella," said Mr. Carington; "here is a piano."

She sat, a tiny thing in white, at the piano of satin-wood. Her pretty little fingers seemed only to tremble on the keys, just bribing the wires to say sweet things at a touch. The song . . . a kind of fairy contralto—

"The eagle said, 'I am old ;'
Said the tomtit, 'I'm older than you'—
A ball of green and gold,
That had counted summers two.

"And the jackdaw said, from his perch,
A pulpit of gray old stone,
'Twas I first founded the Church :
Leave questions of age alone.'

"And the raven came with a croak,
A mixture of humour and woe,
And claimed the Druids' oak
And the magical mistletoe.

"But the eagle, far withdrawn,
Remembered old royal words,
When on Eden's sun-touched lawn
God said, 'Let us make the birds.'

"And away into æther rare,
And close to the sun's fierce gold,
Rose the king of the kings of the air,
Crying, 'Ay, I am young ! I am old.'"

"Where in the world do you get those versicles, Raffaella?" asked Mr. Carington. "You don't make them yourself, I'll swear, for you are much too silly a child."

"Polite, sir," says the Marchesa, with a curtesy whose dignity is in inverse proportion to her size, "do you really want to know our poet? He lives in a garret on about twopence a day. Take him out of his garret, and give him a thousand a year; and, O dear me! what nonsense he will write."

Elinor, who all this time had been silent, and who had an absurd respect for poets, not usual with young ladies, said: "Then must poets be miserable to make other people happy? How cruel! If I were rich, and knew the writer of a song like that you have sung, Marchesa, I would send him something unknown."

"Could a gentleman accept it?" said the Earl.

"Could a gentleman refuse it?" echoed Elinor. "Do you mean to say that if a poet gives me pleasure which will last my life, I may not give him some slight pleasure in return? I would loyally kiss the man who sang me a lovely song, if he would condescend to let my lips touch him."

"We've a quaint old manuscript in our library," said the Earl, "called *The Triads of Delamere*. One is something like this:—

'A lady may kiss a wild bird's wing;
A lady may kiss the hand of a King;
But the mouth of a poet's the sweetest thing.'

"I should very much like to look through those *Triads*," said Mr. Carington.

"There they are; Lucy can find them for you; they are on a choice shelf in the little library, and are bound in vellum, stamped with the Delamere arms. Here's another:—

'Many fools without many fears;
Many lives without many years;
That is the fate of the Delameres.'

"Capital," said Mr. Carington. "I must look up Lucy, the librarian, and get a sight of the book. I'd give a trifle to meet the man who wrote it. Have you another in your memory?"

"Only one, which struck me as a fine rebuke of hypocrisy. It is double, by the way:—

'If true is true, no priest needs prayer;
If brave is brave, no knight need swear;
If chaste is chaste, let maids go bare.

'If true is false, then pray, priest, pray;
If brave is coward, run, knight, away;
If chaste is harlot, maid, dress gay.'

"Ah!" remarked Mr. Carington, "the old rhyme suits our own time only too well. Still, we are not worn out. The ancient temper of the English sword will not be spoilt by just a little rust. I think that I could find a priest or two whom Jeremy Taylor would have heartily loved. I think that I could find a knight or two worthy to ride by Philip Sidney's side. I think that I could find a girl or two as beautiful as any Shakespeare sketched. What do you think of it, Delamere? You are the knight, and Elinor's the girl, and luckily the priest is somewhere else."

Certain persons in the City of Genesis were greatly puzzled and alarmed by the evanishment of Number Two. Gone! no trace left. Despatches and letters untouched. How many people were awaiting the orders of this little woman wrapt in white fur, whom Mr. Carington had as coolly carried away as if she were a baby? But Frank Carington was imperturbable. He would have packed the Pope or the Sultan into a cab and taken him to Colney Hatch with quiet gravity. No other man in Europe would have dared to do this thing, knowing all its consequences; and no other man in Europe could have made the Ravioli obey him. It was a curious mixture of chance and character. This girl had been a child in his arms; he had the strongest will in Christendom. The man who compares humanity with the material universe may find innumerable difficulties. Sometimes you meet a girl who is a diamond; sometimes a man who is gold. Mr. Carington was true steel—"the ice-brook's temper." Still, something more there was in him; the majestic influence which caused him to constrain obedience from many who did not at all like obeying.

The Ravioli's disappearance, leaving no trace, amazed and appalled a good many people. Break one link, and where is your chain? After Number Two, the chief Silent Sister in this unfortunate metropolis was Number Six; she, in addition to her private annoyances, found herself in a position of strange perplexity. It was simply this. She had no orders. She waited at home in Brook Street. She grew troubled and terrified. She had reached that mental state which belongs to most persons who, abjuring their own independence, consent to become links in a chain; so, when nobody knew anything, and she was left utterly to her own devices, she was wholly perplexed. There was no one from whom to take take orders. She had played a sufficiently abominable part when Mr. Carington had seen her. She dared not refuse any order, howsoever hideous, that reached her through her superiors. She was at this moment isolated, and all because that one serious link had been severed by Frank Carington's promptitude and daring.

Ah, but the City of Exodus was most amazed when the news in some mysterious way reached Pantile Palace that there was no Ravioli. Ravioli had been a necessity; for so long a time had suggested, defended, fascinated. Those who desire to know what was the exact limit of the Ravioli's political action, had better ask the well-informed and ably-inspired and curiously eloquent correspondent of that famous journal which broke down over Lily Page. In those regions of Fleet Street journalism, there was a dim notion that the Marchesa Ravioli was somebody, somehow. Could they only have found out who and what she was, they might have made a magnificent harvest.

The Lord of the City of Exodus was deeply troubled when told by his confidential friend that Number Two was not to be found. There

was a shudder through him as, in the Babylon which he had built, he felt the keen touch of outside influence. Against a great idea, your Babylon or Rome has no more strength than a city of cards. Idea reigns: it is the writ of God. The poor devil of an Emperor shivers to his heart's core when the happy thought of a writer or speaker touches him in the weakest point of his manufactured armour.

It would be quite absurd on my part to assert that any small European nation was ruled by a man who had no right to rule, whose chief qualities for usurpation were shyness and cowardice, who was a crowned conspirator. The annals of the world happily mention no such person, so that this narrative merely deals with what might have been if the tide of purity and patriotism had not risen high enough to swamp all the rascals about, without question of political or personal legitimacy. It was probably Rascal * * * to whom the vanishment of the Ravioli brought troublous dreams; but it may be at once understood that his unhappiness was purely political, since Raffaella had no fancy for cads, and a cad on a throne is no better than a cad who conducts an omnibus—probably worse. Their vocations are exactly alike. An Emperor's duty is merely to make his vehicle clean, and his fare fair

OMNIBUS.

Now I think Rascal * * * felt never more shaken as to the stability of his position than on the disappearance of Raffaella Ravioli. Rascal * * *, a very legitimate monarch, as titles to monarchy go, was one of those adventurous cowards formed on the model of Shakespeare's Pistol and Parolles. The world is their oyster; they open it as best they may, but usually tell many lies by way of condiment to their oyster suppers. This man, royal—no, imperial, for *roi* involves *loi*—was in a great state of alarm when the disappearance of our Marchesa became obvious. It naturally did not occur to him that she was in an English country house, under the care of an English gentleman—about as safe quarters as you will find on the surface of this planet. He got into a dreadful state of fear. What he actually did is not of much consequence at this moment. Other events have occurred in the City of Exodus. Other events will occur, so far as one can estimate the idiosyncrasy of that lovely city. It is eternally self-destructive.

That there should be concern in the two great cities of Genesis and Exodus by reason of Raffaella's disappearance is a matter that deserves historic record. At the same time, it may be as well to indicate the fact about it. In the City of Genesis new powers come daily to the front, and there is not a wasted moment. The mysterious disappearance of a lady, being quietly placed in the hands of the police, would trouble no one except those invaluable myrmidons. Not so in the City of Exodus. There the most trivial

matter has always been an excitement. There idiocy is preferred to wisdom, misery to content, wickedness to goodness, if only a little febrile excitement can be achieved thereby. That is the very city for Rascal * * * to rule. How he felt when he had lost Number Two is a matter beyond the power of my pen. What was the result in Europe is a story that has been told by abler pens than mine.

While two cities were puzzled, and while one great personcity was in abject fear, the little woman in her white furs, the Lilliputian whom Carington had known as a girl, was obeying orders at Delamere. Elinor was her gaoler; but, of course, Lucy Walter found her way in by-and-by, under some pretext. The Earl found her a charming refreshment. Mr. Carington looked on and smiled, and thought of the terrible perplexity of Rascal * * *. Delamere was quiet, calm, isolate. All the while there was in Delamere the key to a myriad political secrets. How many people were in dire trouble in the two cities of Genesis and Exodus . . . especially Exodus . . . because this little lady in white fur had been carried away into the North?

There was a confabulation between her and Mr. Carington, which, perhaps, may as well be recorded. He used to come and talk to her, you know, in her own apartment. Be pleased to imagine no harm; Carington liked to talk to a lady,—indeed, he educated several ladies of my acquaintance. And now, an old boy, he regarded Raffaella as a mere child still, though, perhaps, a trifle too old to be thrown into the air in free Florentine fashion.

Raffaella.—How long am I to be kept here, Mr. Carington?

Carington.—Are you *very* tired?

Raffaella.—Well, but I am in prison. Nobody likes being in prison. Please let me out.

Carington.—Where will you go?

Raffaella.—Wherever you tell me.

Carington.—Then why want to go? Why, my child, your dear silly illogical nonsense would make a charming duet—

Please let me out!

Where will you go?

Go and flirt with somebody,

O no, no.

Please let me out,

Else I shall cry:

I want to flirt with somebody,

O fie, fie!

And this, positively, is the clever child who has ruled emperors in her time. No, you are caught, Raffaella. You are my prisoner. You shall stay here just as long as I choose. Do you know why I am so cruel to you?

Raffaella.—You are not at all cruel, Frank. I am only too glad to be safe with you, and to have no more of that dreadful business to do. I am your very willing prisoner; and there could not be a sweeter little gaoler than Elinor. But, Frank, tell me; can you get me out of that dreadful business? I *am* so tired of it.

Carington.—Stay here, child, and you will find everything go right. I see you have no particular affection for Number One. Wait and see what will happen. Stay here. Be friends with my little Elinor. Trust me to make everything right for you. You have been a foolish child to conspire, but I cannot forget my pretty playful pet in the Florentine Gardens.

Raffaella.—(*Sings*):

Ah, the happy gardens,
Then a child was I.
Life, alas! it hardens:
Why? why?
Fairy fountains threw their
Foam toward the sky;
Why were I and you there?
Why? why?

Carington.—You chirp very prettily, my little bird. I mean to keep you in your cage till all is safe.

Raffaella.—Oh, do, please.

CHAPTER XXV.

SARUM.

O, spire of God! O, poem of an architect!
O wondrous winding aisles of saintly mystery!
Prayer blends with praise in this untroubled solitude.

The Comedy of Dreams.

BACK to the dear old city. Bright moonlight fell upon its quiet streets and wide market-place—on the venerable Cathedral—on the quaint windings in the Cathedral-close—when Frank Noel returned to see his uncle, Canon Lovelace. It was strange to him, after his numerous and rapid adventures, to find himself back again in the quiet old city, where his great-grandfather had been famous. To a boy like Frank, the adventures of so short a time seemed wonderful; he fancied he had quite grown into middle-age in the brief period which had made him acquainted with the Great Hall and its indwellers, specially with Elinor. Frank's heretofore had been the quietest of lives: now he had found himself among the strangest of people amid the strangest of circumstances. When a young fellow, who for years has lived quietly, is suddenly plunged into the ocean of life, the con-

trast is something tremendous. Frank Noel could scarcely believe he was the same man as this evening he walked in the moonlight beneath the shadow of the marvellous spire, and knocked at the door under the round archway, where a small brass plate indicated *Canon Lovelace*.

It was late. Frank, not knowing how his uncle might be, had sent his portmanteau to the hotel. He walked in beneath the round arch, where a lamp was burning, and was admitted by the Canon's ancient butler, coeval with the Canon himself; and carefully on guard during his master's illness.

"Mr. Frank," said this fine old boy, whose very voice had an orthodox touch of port-wine in it, "I am so glad to see you. You will stay and look after the Canon, I hope."

"How is he, Laurence?"

"Not so very bad, sir, I don't think; but there's a Minx in the case."

"A what?"

"A Minx, Mr. Frank, begging your pardon. That's the only word I can think of."

Now, as Laurence had known Frank from a baby, and had often helped him to surreptitious little niceties in his pantry, from the bread and jam of early years to the glass of strong ale of later ones, he looked upon him as his especial favourite, and could use some freedom with him. Indeed, he considered that he had helped to "bring up" the young gentleman, and thought that Master Frank did him credit. The old butler and the Canon had sometimes shaken their heads over the fact that poor Frank was being spoilt between those two women, meaning his mother and grandmother; but Laurence had always consoled the Canon, by saying, "We'll have him here, sir, and alter all that."

And when Frank turned out a fine young fellow, Laurence remarked to the Canon, "I think we've made a man of him, sir." Therefore, when Frank arrived, poor old Laurence at once began pouring out his troubles to him. "Master have never had any female folk about him before, Master Frank," he said; "he has always been satisfied with what I could do for him. But I don't know what he has got in his head that he must send for this Minx."

"But where did she come from?" said Frank.

"From somewhere in the North. When master was taken ill, he said he did not like giving me so much trouble, as I was getting old, and he thought he ought to have a nurse. I told him I could do all that was necessary, but that if he wished to have a nurse, there was old Nurse Jenkins who have nursed the Close these thirty years. But master wouldn't hear of her. He had got something in his head about an advertisement in that paper he gets every Saturday afternoon, called the *Lectern*. He said that he thought he should be able

to get a nurse who would not only nurse him, but would be able to read to him and write his letters. You see, Master Frank, I'm quite ready to read to him; but what with my eyesight not being as good as it was, and I was taken away from school just as I came to three syllables in the spelling-book, I don't read quite as fast as you young people. But you know I can write letters well enough when I am not hurried."

"Yes," said Frank, and he remembered the dear old scrawl which he had received at Delamere.

"However, master told me how to answer an advertisement from the *Lectern*; and then there came a letter from an Archdeacon, saying what a wonderful young lady the Minx . . . I mean Miss Gertrude Wilkinson was. She was of the highest church principles, and I don't know what else. So master told me to write for her to come, and she came; and she's a regular Minx, and that's all I can say of her. She won't let me see master if she can help it. When I take anything up to him she takes it from me at the door, and says I shall disturb the Canon if I go in—as if I ever disturbed him! Only to think, Master Frank, that this house should be turned topsy-turvy by a woman after all these years!"

All this information was given in a half-whisper down in the hall, where the butler had received his master's nephew. The Canon in the hands of a Minx was to Frank an idea almost unimaginable. Even a Minx, recommended by a northern archdeacon, through the medium of that grave and gravid journal, the *Lectern*, seemed almost incredible to Frank. He looked at the ancient butler with surprise. The butler knew the meaning of that look, but could only reply by one of bewilderment. That his dear old master should fall into the hands of a Minx was to him as complete a puzzle as to Master Frank, who, perchance, had greater experience of such phenomena.

"Never mind, Laurence," said Frank Noel, "I dare say we shall make it all right. Tell my uncle I am here. I know he will be glad to see me when he feels well enough."

The butler went up-stairs, and returned to say, that Mr. Noel was requested to walk up. Frank, accordingly, ascended to the pleasant old room overlooking the Cathedral Close—a room full of antique books, and with pleasant window-seats and many multitudinous memoirs. Laurence showed him up with a kind of abrupt unwillingness, and left him alone with—the Minx.

It may be feared that journals like the *Lectern* are responsible for the existence of ladies like the Minx. They give a chance to the ecclesiastic adventuress—the Becky Sharp of the Church—the young person who is quite ready to take charge of any person in any parish, and who always manages to obtain archdeacons' testimonials. The Minx, as old Laurence irreverently styled her, was a Miss Gertrude Wilkinson, whose father, Dr. Wilkinson, was a school-

master, whose degree had been obtained in some Continental university. Old Wilkinson was indeed one of the most venerable humbugs that ever trod this earth's surface; but everybody believed in him, the religious included, and therefore everybody believed in Miss Gertrude, who was at least as great an impostor as her white-haired papa.

When the Canon wanted somebody to take care of him, and an advertisement in the *Lectern* brought him into communication with the highly reputable Dr. Wilkinson's daughter, he deemed himself very fortunate. When the lady came, he was delighted. She was about thirty; the irreverent might have styled her a buxom wench. She had fine curves of shoulder, and knew how to exhibit an enticing ankle. She took charge of the dear old Canon at once. Her arch-diaconal testimonial was everything. She managed him and his affairs with the greatest coolness, driving his old servants almost wild by her off-hand way of dealing with them. The Canon himself, imagining her to be a perfect lady, and glad in his weakness to surrender himself to female management, was quite happy to be thus governed. There is, doubtless, an immense amount of pleasure in being managed by a woman, and I am one of those who would like to see women entirely managing the world. How well they would do it! I long for petticoat government, for the complete disfranchisement of the male sex—for the time when any man who dares to have an opinion without permission (registered at the nearest post-office) of his mother or wife or daughter shall be publicly flogged. This is the inevitable civilisation of the future. I am impatient for it. The superior sex ought to assert their power.

To return to Miss Gertrude Wilkinson, whom old Laurence called the Minx. She took complete possession of the Canon, who submitted absolutely. She was rather glad to hear that a nephew had arrived; the lively and lovely creature regarded a nephew as worth consideration, and did not anticipate the sort of fellow she found in Frank Noel. Frank was much too dull a fellow for Miss Gertrude. Frank, as may have been perceived, had his own way of looking at affairs.

He was shown, as I have said, into the presence of the Minx. He looked at her not altogether admiringly. She was dressed in a way to display her attractions to the utmost within the limits of decency. There are ladies who might walk naked without indecency; there are women whose mode of dress always conveys some indecent idea. Of this latter kind was Gertrude Wilkinson. Her shoulders and her ankles were obtrusive. You might apply to her certain lines which the Earl of Rochester wrote concerning Mistress Nell Gwyn.

"I am afraid," she said to Frank, "that Canon Lovelace is not well enough to see you this evening. I am sure he will wish to see you to-morrow. He was most anxious for you to come."

"You don't think he is well enough to-night," says Frank. "I am very sorry. He is fortunate in having you to take care of him. Shall I be in the way here?"

"Oh, not at all. A room has been prepared for you. The Canon instructed me to ask you to make yourself quite at home."

"Thanks," said Frank. "I'll tell Laurence to send for my luggage. It is not much. How terribly cold the weather is!"

"Let me order you something, Mr. Noel," said Miss Wilkinson.

"Well," replied Frank, "if you'll make me a cup of tea, and put some brandy in it with those fair hands, I shall feel happy."

And as Frank Noel said this, he gave the Minx a look which made her think him a fool. She was quite wrong. Next time she advertises in the *Lectern* she will admit her error.

Miss Gertrude Wilkinson ordered tea, and a mutton cutlet, and some anchovy toast, and made Mr. Frank Noel extremely cozy. The old quaint room that he knew so well, with the Canon's favourite oil paintings on the wall, warmed into beauty by the flickering fire, which danced on the Claudes and Rembrandts, and lighted up the bright silver and rare old Dresden china of the tea service, and gave a kind of attractiveness even to the Minx. This young lady had resolved to be attractive in one way or the other,—there was a rather piquant combination in her of the heavenly with the earthly. When she talked of Canon Lovelace it was as if he were the most seraphic of parsons, and she the devoutest creature that ever enjoyed archidiaconal patronage and canonical comfort. When she poured out the tea and carved the outlets, her undeniably handsome arms and shoulders came into splendid play. Frank was a little puzzled by her, but not so puzzled as he would have been had he not known Elinor. The best safeguard against being inveigled by men and women who are false, is to know those who are true. I fear I have more than once quoted that divine saying of Steele's concerning a lady, that "to love her was a liberal education;" but I doubt whether it can be quoted too often. To know a lady is to love her,—is to learn from her,—is to be refined by her; and I am not at all afraid of my wife's being jealous when I say that I love every lady I know. How they differ, these sparkling gems of ladyhood! . . . and yet are all alike in being pure gems, the true *pelluciduli lapides*. One is a ruby of passion and power; another a sapphire of sky-tinted purity; another an emerald of poetic quietude; another a diamond of brilliancy and wit. All true gems. Now Frank had found his gem, and had learnt much thereby. Elinor was the simplest child in the world, but with all the purity and sparkle of a running stream. From such a girl Methuselah himself might learn, though he had passed his nine-hundredth year. Balzac has somewhere said, that it is not remarkable that men cannot understand women, since their Creator failed to do so. As against this ferocious

French criticism I venture on the mild profanity, that if it were possible for God to learn a lesson it would be from one of His loveliest creations.

Frank had, sometime or other, learnt a great deal in a short time from Elinor. For ever she was in his mind's eye. Not for the millionth of a moment could he forget that lovely girl, so unsuspecting, independent, guileless, gay, tender, thoughtful. The lovely music of her voice dwelt in his ears; the lovely light of her eyes was always before him. The melody of a bird, the shining of the twinkling stars, were his perennial possession; but beyond them lay the influence of a serene and happy and radiant spirit, the very essence of life and light and love. This girl Elinor had unconsciously taught Frank much that he learnt as unconsciously, and her sweet fair form was always in his imagination; therefore it is not remarkable that he remained unfascinated by Miss Gertrude Wilkinson, the Minx.

She tried her best: faith!—this nephew was the very subject whereon she desired to experiment. Six feet of him or so, well knit, well dressed, not too clever . . . why he ought to be as soft as clay in the hands of

Our Lady, the Minx

(to use the neoteric postaster's method of putting it). It is probable that Frank Noel would have been a mere baby in the hands of this politic young person, if he had never seen Elinor. But he had seen Elinor. He had known beauty and truth. He detected, with all his dullness, the ugliness of falsehood. Still, he ate his outlets, drank his tea, and admired Miss Gertrude's coquetries.

She was not chary of them. She assured him that he had better not disturb his uncle that night; and herein she was supported by the doctor, who came in rather late, and found the dear old Canon in a sound sleep, and recommended that his sleep should be unbroken. Frank, finding this the case, and slightly tired with the Minx's agaceries, went off to smoke a cigar in the Close, and to see if Sarum had much changed since last he perambulated there.

It suddenly occurred to him that he would call on Mr. Pinniger, On his way to do so he dropped in for a moment at the White Hart, ecclesiastic hostelry, famous for eels, and there, by good hap, met Pinniger himself. The lawyer was amazed at the sudden rencontre.

"Why, Frank," he cried, "come down to see your uncle?"

"Yes," he answered. "I have not yet seen him, though; for the doctor says he is not well enough. I only got down this evening. There's a young woman on the premises I don't much admire."

"Ah," said Pinniger, taking a long breath, "come in and have a glass of brown sherry, Frank. The brown sherry is as good as it used to be."

They went into a private room, where a pleasant fire was burning. Over the sherry the lawyer said—

"I don't like that young woman, Frank ; she is too pious for me, though I am the Bishop's and Dean's attorney. She is, I fear, a humbug. What is her little game I cannot guess ; but she wants to get something out of the Canon, and is doing her best to prevent any one from approaching him. Now you are the right person to put a stop to this, and I'll help you. I am right glad you have come down just now. We heard you had married and gone to Australia."

"Not a bit of it," said Frank. "Old Laurence has already told me about this girl. He calls her the Minx."

"Capital!" said Pinniger. "Minx she is, every inch. Take care of her ; she'll make love to you, I'll swear. She's one of those sensuously spiritual young women who are half deaconess, half prostitute. The clergy get taken in by them terribly, for a good clergyman like your uncle naturally thinks no evil. By Jove, Noel, I'd have such women publicly flogged."

"I thought this evening she seemed very much inclined to be rather familiar," quoth Frank, "which is chiefly why I turned out for a stroll. Can't you help me to get her out of the house? I don't like the idea of such a woman near my dear old uncle."

"I'll try," said the lawyer. "Come down to my office about twelve to-morrow ; you will have seen the Canon by that time."

Frank, wishing Pinniger good night, walked quietly home. Laurence admitted him. Laurence whispered,—

"She's about, Mr. Frank. Don't you look at her if she comes near you. She's a bad lot, I'll swear."

But Frank went straight to his room, and dreamt of Elinor.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FROM ELINOR AND RAFFAELLA.

"O little love, whose lightest line is beautiful . . .

The brightest dewdrop on the rose that's ruddiest !"

The Comedy of Dreams.

TRINITY in unity (I write unprofanely) is the law of the world. Everywhere there are triads. The greatest triad of all is

God
|
Man—Woman.

The life of man is utterly empty, unless he has God above him and woman with him. This is the very first lesson that should be taught : too often it is never taught at all. Frank Noel had unconsciously learned it : in lonely wanderings and ponderings he had realised the Deity, and he had seen Elinor. These two facts kept

him safe from the allurements of the most alluring Minx in the world.

When Frank next morning awoke in a quaint old-fashioned chamber, which looked out upon the great cathedral, it took him some little time to remember where he was, and why. He had seen so many people in so short a time, that his brain was in a kind of cyclone. The dreams of morning left him perplexed. The Canon, whom he had not seen, and the Minx, and butler, and attorney, whom he had, were mixed up in an odd way with the dramatis personæ of Delamere.

Boyhood is imaginative; and Frank, whose growth had been slow, was even now no more than a manly boy. Slow-growing folk are the best. Boys and girls who too rapidly approach the verge of manhood and womanhood, seldom develop into fair proportions of mind and body. They are dwarfs—stunted creatures, usually short-lived. The man who is to live to a hundred is a boy at forty. As to women, well—questions of age are not polite in reference to them; but you may meet a woman of forty who is younger than a girl of eighteen. It is the difference between the ripe and the rotten—between the lady and the Minx.

The Minx, as Frank Noel opened his eyes that morning and looked through the ivy-framed casement of his chamber, was a portion of his dreams. It was rather late. The sunshine threw the shadow of the unrivalled spire across the quiet Close. The bells were ringing for service. When Frank got out of bed and went to the window, he saw the orderly and demure old maids of Sarum, trooping to church. He wondered whether he, a lad, ought to go to church. There is a time in the life of every young fellow to whom God has given imagination when the problems of life perplex and trouble him. Frank Noel, slow in growth, had as yet concerned himself little about life's problems; but when he looked through his casement at the folk going to church, he could not help wondering why there were about fifty women to one man, minor canons and choristers included.

However, he had private problems of his own to solve, so he lay in bed after the cathedral bells had ended their sacred summons, and thought over his own position and his uncle's. As to his own—did Elinor, that creature of pure natural charms, care anything about him? Frank thought so; yet was uncertain. A more precocious youngster would at an earlier date have discovered the actual truth. Frank's courage was greater anywhere than in the presence of the girl he loved. He might have been too audacious, perchance, to a girl he cared nothing about; but I hope not.

Morning service was over by the time lazy Frank Noel had arranged his dreams. When he took his next look at the Close, the demure virgins of Sarum were going home to lunch. He began to

think it was time to ring his bell; when he did so Laurence appeared.

"Letter for you, Mr. Frank," says the butler. "Thought I'd better take charge of it."

That letter bore the Carlisle postmark, and was sealed with the crest of the Caringtons—a goshawk, with the motto, *Frank and Free*: and, indeed, it was addressed in that curious old-fashioned handwriting which was common to men of Mr. Carington's time—a scrawl, that looked careless, yet was perfectly legible. In these days men write carefully, and are perfectly illegible.

However, Frank's epistle did not come from Carington, and I don't know that Frank cared much about that. Pity the boy could not have seen how it was written, for Elinor was in the daintiest disorder of dress at the time, and the Marchesa was lazily lying in bed, wondering what Number One thought of the position of affairs. Mr. Carington had said to Elinor,—

"Write Frank Noel a little letter; he will be lonely down at Salisbury by himself."

Elinor, in the lightest attire, that afternoon remembered the mandate, and sat down to obey. You see, she was acting as gaoler, and she was going to dress for dinner; and her prisoner was dreaming the hours away with that superb depth of indolence which always belongs to the highly excitable temperament. The maddest people are ever the laziest.

"To whom are you writing?" asks the little Marchesa, a smaller creature amid the bed-clothes than in her favourite white furs. "Come, Elinor, tell me; is it a lover? Of course, it must be, or you would not be so anxious about it."

The Ravioli, though she had known Elinor so few hours, talked to her as if she were her sister, calling her by newly invented names, and chaffing her quite merrily. She was only a conspirator out of sheer fun, and because she loved the swift movement of life. There was no real wickedness in her, but a curious lack of conscience, and a strong delight in intense excitement. She was the very Ariel of conspiracy.

"I am writing a note by Mr. Carington's request," says that little hypocrite Elinor. Of course, it was quite true, this statement.

"Now, may I see it when you have done?" asked the Ravioli; "and may I add a postscript? Of course, I mean if it is to a gentleman. If it is to a lady, I am not in the least interested."

"You shall see the letter, if you like, and you shall write a postscript," said Elinor; "and I hope that will stop you from trying to tease me."

"O dear no, it won't. I must have some one to tease. I am a prisoner, and you are my warder, and I shall revenge myself by plaguing you."

"Will you?" said Elinor; "wait and see what revenge I shall take."

So Frank Noel got a curious letter, running thus . . .

"DEAR MR. NOEL,

"I am told by Mr. Carington to write and tell you what is going on at Delamere, for he thinks you may be lonely at Salisbury.

"There is nothing to tell you, except that it is very cold, and that I have a very mysterious companion. I have promised that she shall read my letter, if she likes, and even add a postscript. Nobody knows who she is, except Mr. Carington, who seems to know everything. She is very charming and very tiresome, and I really wish you were here to flirt with her and keep her quiet. You wouldn't look at me if you saw her; she is just like a little white mouse. I am writing this about her that is quite true, though I have promised her she shall see my letter.

"I do hope your dear uncle is better, and that your visit will do him good. What little I have heard you and Mr. Carington say of him makes me sure that he is a man I should love, if I knew him, and he would let me. You are to write to me or to Mr. Carington, and tell us all about it. You may write to me, if you like, sir; but, if you do, you must be very respectful. Do you quite understand?

"I miss Mr. Fitz-Rupert dreadfully. What a charming specimen he is of the young English gentleman! Don't you think so?

"It is dreadfully cold. I think I said that before; but, really, it is so cold here, one can't help saying things several times over. It makes one's mind chatter as well as one's teeth.

"E."

Frank Noel laughed at this wickedly worded crotchet. Then he looked curiously at the postscript, writ in a quaint fantastic Italian hand, with letters whose heads and tails were like shadows in the sunset, while the general movement of the manuscript resembled wheat before the wind:—

"I am allowed to write you a note, sir. Who am I? Do you think you can guess. I am a wicked wild little mystery, old enough to be mother of your sweetheart. She is the prettiest purest naughtiest English girl that ever I saw. She is a primrose; I am a passion-flower. She is a ring-dove; I am a wood-pigeon. She is in love with you; I am teasing her. She has promised to send this postscript. She is a girl to keep her promises. Ask her to make a promise to you.

"I, too, sign with a single letter.

"R."

"Well," thought Frank Noel, "this is odd. Whence came this wondrous clever writer of postscripts? There was nobody at Delamere when I left, except that little monkey, Lucy. This mystery is

somebody fresh. Old Carington is a master of mysteries. 'A little white mouse,' says Elinor; 'old enough to be Elinor's *mater*,' says the lady herself. Queer! Well, it was good of Carington to make Elinor send me a line; and I suppose she would not have done it unless he had ordered it. He makes everybody obey orders, dear old boy.

Frank Noel, having read his letter with its mysterious postscript several times over, dressed and descended, resolving this morning to see his uncle, whatever obstructions Miss Gertrude Wilkinson might contrive to place in his way. He found that young person comfortably seated at a late breakfast. There was fragrance of tea and aroma of coffee, and crisp thin slices of Wiltshire bacon tempted the palate, and muffins were being kept comfortably warm before the fire. The Minx was in cosy quarters, and knew how to appreciate them. Laurence's scornful smile was something to look upon, as he ushered Frank into the room.

"You are just in time for breakfast, Mr. Noel," says Gertrude Wilkinson. "I am obliged to be late, as I must first of all attend to the Canon."

"How is my uncle this morning?" said Frank, who had decided on his line of action, and who sat down to eat and drink with perfect coolness. "Laurence, get me some claret; I don't care for tea and coffee. My uncle will be able to see me this morning, no doubt, Miss Wilkinson."

"I hope so," she said, "though, indeed, he is very weak."

"Ha! seeing me will strengthen him. Cut me some of that brawn, on the sideboard, Laurence. We are famous for brawn here, in the Close, as I dare say you have discovered, Miss Wilkinson."

Frank's notion was not a bad one; he thought he would talk to the young person and to Laurence as if they were on equal terms. After all, Laurence was the one to reasonably complain; he, a dignified ecclesiastic butler, with a perfect palate for port, to be levelled with a pert little chit of a "lady-housekeeper." Certes, hard upon Laurence . . . who was to the Minx as an artist is to an adventurer. She, however, was the person most annoyed, for the butler possessed the humility of true genius.

Frank Noel made a hearty breakfast, glanced through the paper, spoke much less to Miss Wilkinson than to Laurence, who remained in the room during the meal. When he had finished, Frank said to the butler,—

"Laurence, go and ask my uncle if he can see me."

Miss Wilkinson rose from her seat.

"Really, Mr. Noel," she said, "it would be most unwise to disturb Canon Lovelace so abruptly. I cannot answer for the consequences."

"It is not necessary you should, Miss Wilkinson. I came from Cumberland to see my uncle, and I fear he will be grieved I have delayed so long."

The Minx was standing by the fireplace, looking very angry indeed . . . her face flushed, her hands clenched. She did not want to lose her influence over the Canon, though it would be hard to say what she expected to gain by keeping it. Nothing is more difficult to guess than the motives which will actuate a person of inferior nature. Very angry was she ; angrier still when Laurence entered, saying,—

“The Canon wishes you to walk up, Mr. Frank.”

There is just now a feminine rebellion among the women who, morally or mentally or physically, are unfit to be wives ; one of the products thereof is that often pretty but usually unwholesome fungus, the lady-housekeeper. The cases in which the creature thus named has done harm, of one kind or another, are only too numerous. No one who has studied the developments of modern life can, on this point, be doubtful. The position is a difficult one for the best of girls, and would be shunned by most good girls who could find any other way of living respectably ; is beset with temptations for any girl not perfectly good. Now, I am not going to say that the feminine rebellion is entirely unjustifiable—no rebellions are. Something may be urged for even Fenians and Communists. It is credibly stated that the true leader of this sexual revolt is the Superior Woman, and of the Superior Woman all men must stand in awe, though the indomitable son of Peleus and Thetis knew how to treat Penthesilea. Unluckily, the Superior Woman has not got this new insurrection all to herself. You hear of her at South Kensington, at medical schools, at places where lady-artists draw from the nude model ; in magazines where neoteric and esoteric thought is expressed in sesquipedalian style, to the speedy ruin of those confiding capitalists whom the Superior Women induce to establish them. I regard the Superior Woman as a superb phenomenon, though I would rather not have her in the same house with me. I obtain instruction by looking at her through the telescope of imagination. But the Superior Woman, while she conquers mankind with marvellous power, has her own troubles. No living thing is without its parasite. The Superior Woman, gloriously emancipating herself and her sex, emancipates, among others, the Minx. That young person thinks that she also will be free—will make a career for herself—will carry delight into the bosoms of families, especially families whose heads are widowers. The Superior Woman naturally detests and despises the Minx ; but the returns of the Statistical Society show that widowers foolishly prefer the latter to the former. Now, widowers, it may be observed (specially such of them as can afford to keep a Minx), are an influential class of society : they almost always want to marry again, either to get a mother for their children, or because they made a mistake the first time, or because they didn't. The third class are an infinitesimal proportion of the whole.

It is calculated that 99·95 per cent. of widowers marry Minxes; but only one has been discovered during the present century who wedded a Superior Woman . . . and she was his deceased wife's sister.

This digression leaves Miss Gertrude Wilkinson in the breakfast-room, red with anger at being foiled, for she had some vague notion in her head of keeping Frank apart from his uncle, the Canon—peradventure of flirting with him in the intervals of her attendance on the old gentleman. It also leaves Laurence showing Frank upstairs; but now the old butler may throw open the door, and leave uncle and nephew together. Very worn and ill looked Canon Lovelace, in an easy chair, by the fireside, with some weak invalid broth on a small table, near him, and a book . . . be sure! . . . in his tremulous hand. It was Coleridge's *Church and State*, a volume that gives much displeasure to any modern Radical who is capable of reading it.

That such a man as Canon Lovelace should care to have a Minx about him, may seem strange; yet, remember that saying of a great poet—

"Who meanes no guile beguiled soonest shall."

To the Canon, who, a veteran bachelor, had always been an admirer of ladies, and was a favourite to the last at those pleasant tea-parties in Sarum Close, where Watteau groups of womanhood surrounded Sevres china, and Keble and Pusey and Liddon were surface-subjects, and there was often a game of whist in the end—there seemed no guile in this archidiaconally testimonialled young person. Canon Lovelace might irreverently be described as a general lover; he liked ancient ladies who could chat with him of his own old days, when Tract XC. was unwritten, and the deep questions of genuflection and auricular confession had not occurred to a race of rectors who could ride across country and drink port; he also liked the pretty girls of the new time, whose brainlets were all agog with fresh theologic fantasies, and who found intense delight in daily service, until they married, and who, though they of course worshipped curates, were seldom allowed by their mammas to marry them. His perfect guilelessness made him the easiest possible victim of pretty plausible Miss Gertrude; so it was lucky Frank had turned up at this time.

The Canon was too weak to talk much. Frank explained that he had been induced to delay seeing him; and his uncle seemed to think it was all for the best. It was very clear to Frank Noel that this young woman had made the Canon believe in her, and greatly puzzled he felt how to act. In a sick room, what chance has a man against a woman?

"I wish Elinor were here," he thought to himself. He had begun to be quite a believer in Elinor's capacity. And he did not at all like to see his uncle so obviously at the mercy of a Minx.

"I hope you will stay, now you are here, Frank," said the Canon,

in a very weak voice. "I cannot see much of you ; but I shall be so glad if you will come in once or twice a day. Laurence and Miss Wilkinson will take care that you are comfortable ; she, I assure you, is an invaluable person."

Frank Noel saw it was vain to say a word against the Minx just then, so contented himself with the unuttered reflection that *invaluable* is a word with two meanings, diametric in contrast. He also thought Miss Gertrude Wilkinson invaluable.

The conversation between Frank and his uncle was brief, for the Canon was too feeble to prolong it. Frank took leave, promising to remain at Salisbury, and pressing the Canon to summon him whenever he found himself at all worse. Then our friend walked rapidly downstairs, and out into the Close, taking no notice whatever of Miss Gertrude, who "happened" (as Corporal Trim would say) to be passing through the hall as he took his hat. Frank was full of mixed feelings. He pitied his uncle, evidently very ill ; he was angry with the Minx for taking up her position in the Canon's household, speculating, it was easy to see, on getting something solid thereby ; he was disgusted with himself for not knowing what best to do. He cared not a doit though this young woman got a legacy from his uncle ; but he hated to see the noble feeble old man in such bad hands. Bitterly blew the east wind as he took two or three sharp turns up and down the Close ; at last, he walked rapidly out of it, saying to himself, "Well, I must see Pinniger ; and then I'll write to Carington, and tell him all about it, and ask his advice."

The keen eyes of the Minx had been watching him as he walked. She laughed gaily as she lost sight of him, turned from the window to an easy chair by the fire, and buried herself in a scrofulous French novel.

CHAPTER, XXVII.

A MYSTERY.

"All mighty towns hold mysteries inscrutable—
But holds not measureless ocean stranger mysteries ?"

QUICKLY, but with sufficient style and distinction, the Prince and Princess Oistravieff were married a second time under the auspices of the Ambassador. At once they were to start for the Continent, open now to the Prince, as he had made peace with the mysterious societies. The wedding was effected with all possible rapidity, for the Prince desired to make immediate use of his newly obtained freedom, since he was heartily tired of his imprisonment in this detested island. Having married Paulovna, partly through fear and

partly through policy, he was resolved to have some enjoyment of life in return. Italy was his object ; he had a yacht at Cowes, and determined to take her round to the Mediterranean and meet the slow-coming spring. He had the Russian love of luxuriant travel. His yacht, a comfortable schooner, was fitted up with voluptuous costliness. Save for certain superb pictures, too warm in conception and colour, his state-rooms, all silk and gold, might have been the boudoir of queens.

Paulovna made no objection to any arrangement. She seemed languid and terrified as she went through the marriage ceremony with this man. The change observed in her by keen-eyed Carington had already become more clear. Bystanders wondered at her listlessness as she was driven away to the terminus in the Prince's handsome chariot and four. She looked more like a ghost than a bride.

The yacht ran gaily down channel with a fair bridal wind. Though so early in the year, there was neither fog nor rain, and the Prince, enjoying his freedom, his dinners, his Heidseck, was almost gallant to his wife. She could not help yielding a trifle to the influence of sea air and swift change of scene, and gained colour and appetite, and half forgot her past wickedness, her dread of impending danger.

The voyage, thus merrily begun, was not destined in like manner to end. Late at night, as the schooner passed the Straits, a gun-boat shot out from the African shore, and threw up a rocket as a signal for her to shorten sail. The steamer was alongside immediately ; a score of men, all armed, all masked, swarmed on her deck, and their leader sternly said to the frightened crew—

“ Prince and Princess Oistravieff are below, I know. Show me to their cabin.”

Resistance to such force was vain. They rushed below. Oistravieff and Paulovna were both asleep in their berths. Before they were sufficiently awake to guess at their position, both were bound with ropes, just as they were, hurried over the side of the yacht, and placed on board the gun-boat. The whole affair seemed to occur in ten minutes. The amazed captain and crew of the yacht stood on deck watching the gun-boat's lessening lights, in a state of helpless wonder as to what had been done and what they ought to do. The captain, an imperturbable Englishman, silently lighted a pipe, and tried to get some wisdom out of smoke ; but the steward, a quick little Irishman, exclaimed—

“ ‘Bout ship and back to England. Put in at Falmouth.”

This was done : the report brought home by the crew caused the sensation of the year. Police and journalists were all alive ; Prince Oistravieff's yacht was overhauled by the one and described by the other, but with no special result ; his confidential servant, Repnin, was officially examined, and unofficially, but could or would tell nothing. The Foreign Secretary and the First Lord of the Admiralty

made stringent inquiries about the mysterious gun-boat, but she was untraceable.

Still, as always is the case when a mysterious affair occurs, there leaked out rumours as to the previous career of the Prince and Princess Oistravieff . . . as to a double marriage and a dark conspiracy . . . especially as to the fact that the Princess was no other than that illustrious incognita, Lily Page. If editorial wisdom was baffled by the problem itself, editorial eloquence had now a grand opportunity, and abundantly justified itself. A Russian Prince marrying a light-o'-love, and decorating his yacht for her in a style fit for royalty, but with embellishments unfit for modest eyes, and then the wicked being caught and carried off by a corsair, was a series of events not often vouchsafed to the fluent leader-writer. The grandeur of the style was adequate to the gravity of the lesson. Princes and Minxes alike were suitably admonished. Nothing so startling had happened for ages, and the breakfasts of London were eaten with better appetite now that the morning paper brought so piquant an addition to what Tom Moore called

"Your ghost

Of a breakfast in England—your cursed tea and toast."

As for that gun-boat, it steamed rapidly away through the Straits. The Prince, a coward as we know, was insensible with terror. Paulovna only exclaimed in her terror—

"Yes, it has come at last. I knew it would;" and then tried to pray. Both were carelessly thrown, bound and almost naked as they were, into a dark cabin below, and no sound came near them save the throbbing of the engine and the churning of the water. Oistravieff was deadened by fear; but poor Paulovna, of keener and stronger mind, was widely wakeful.

"Where are we going?" she thought; "what will happen to us? I am rightly treated for marrying this villain, and for trying to kill my best friend. O, if I were free for a week, I would kill Number One!"

On she went to a dreadful fate, the great sea roaring, the strong engine crushing it down, the harsh ropes cutting her tender limbs, the cold freezing her through; yet she could not fall into the fortunate stupidity of her husband-coward. Frank Noel in the Cathedral Close, reading the papers with this wondrous news in them, remembered Oistravieff as a liar and coward, and did not immensely regret his fate. Mr. Carington, in the great hall at Langton Delamere, getting the same information, was perhaps less surprised than any other Englishman. It reached him at breakfast, in an evening paper which was sent him by post; he was breakfasting alone, for Lucy was waiting on the Earl, but Rachette had consoled him in his loneliness by an appetizing service. Alas! the worthy *chef's* brilliant little dishes, specially designed for Mr. Carington, were lost on him this morning. He sent for Lucy Walter.

"Lucy," he said, "how is Lord Delamere this morning?"

"Much better, sir. He would be glad to see you."

"I shall be glad to see him," quoth Mr. Carington, and went to his apartment, where he found his lordship in high spirits after a noble sleep. He showed him the paper, which the Earl read in silence.

"By Jove, Carington," he said, when he reached the end of the story, "we shan't see that poor devil again. He was a bad fellow, even for a Russian; but I had known him too long and too intimately to cut him dead. What will they do with them?"

"Who are 'they'? is the question. I suppose it must be Number One. We must take good care of the little Ravioli, Delamere."

"Suppose either you or I were to marry her?" said the Earl, laughing. "Are you going to show her this?"

"Certainly; but I wished you to see it first. You and I can see what is going on . . . a war between conspirators on thrones and conspirators in cellars. Still, what good would it be for us to do our duty and communicate all that we know to the Foreign Office? Such fools are they in that department, that either they would not believe us, or would give our secret information to the very people who ought not to have it. That poor cowardly Oistravieff; it is worse for him than my godson's fist. I suppose they'll make him walk the plank?"

"Well, go and frighten the Marchesa, Frank, while I think over the matter. So far as I see, you are right, and our line is to be wisely ignorant."

Mr. Carington took the paper and went to the Marchesa, who was at breakfast with Elinor. To her he said—

"Run away, child. You may take a slice of bread and butter with you, if you are very hungry. I have to talk secrets."

Elinor went, with a smile, without a slice. Mr. Carington abridged for the Marchesa the circuitous statement of the paper. She was startled, and turned pale.

"O Frank!" she exclaimed, "I told you I should get into dreadful trouble."

"What! here? Do you think a gun-boat can steam up these hills?"

"Ah, but Number One has a long arm."

"Has he?" laughed Carington. "Well, to make up for it, his legs are much too short . . . though they won't be too short to run away some day."

"Oh, but this *does* frighten me."

"It need not. The Earl proposes that either he or I should marry you, if you are very much afraid."

"I was never good enough for you, Frank," she said, and began to weep.

"You baby, Raffaella! Let's have neither tears nor fears; you are safe here, and you shall not leave till all peril is over. It won't be long."

"Oh, how do you know?" she asked eagerly. She was April-born: fear and grief and curiosity and fun followed each other over the sky of her mind, like cloud and rain and mist and light.

"Number One is a coward: I mean to frighten him."

She laughed and clapped her tiny ring-fettered diamond-sprinkled hands, exclaiming—

"O what fun!"

"Not for him!" thought Mr. Carington, but said it not.

Lord Delamere and Mr. Carington held their peace, and left the Foreign Office and the police to adroitly bungle and ingeniously stumble; but some one else took the trouble to furnish a bit of curious information. It was in the form of a letter, posted at Charing Cross, and written in Russian. It said—

"Go to the Red House at Wandsworth, for some time occupied by conspirators, and you will discover something of the Oistravieffa."

This letter was addressed in a feminine hand to the Chief of Police.

The Red House looked dreary when visited by a detachment of intelligent officers. No sign of life. All shutters shut; the walled-in garden a picture of desolation. The front door had to be broken open, for it was heavily barred within. There was a suffocating smell of damp and decay in the rooms. The police opened the shutters and let in the light of day, then searched the place thoroughly from cellar to garret. In one room only found they anything; this was the chamber wherein Lily Page had received the Prince Oistravieff, to her harm and to his, on a certain memorable night. The charming furniture of the room was now a chaos. Gilt chairs, broken mirrors and lustres, crashed decanters and glasses, lying for the policemen's heavy boots to tread into the carpet; pictures gashed with cuts from sword and dagger. What had been the last scene in that ghastly chamber, who can guess?

The only steadfast sight there was the ghastliest of all. On the table lay the corpse of a woman, clothed only in a night-dress, bound with cords, a long sharp foreign dagger struck so strongly through her left breast that it penetrated the board beneath. On her bosom lay a square of paper, with these words in Russian—

"Paulovna Oistravieff,
Princess and traitress."

(To be continued.)

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THE OWL'S NEST IN THE CITY.

CHAPTER IV.

"Each hath his place and function to attend :
I am left out : for me nothing remains."—SHAKESPEARE.

"O forbid it, God,
That in a Christian climate, souls refined
Should show so heinous, black, obscene a deed !"—IBID.

ONE week more, and Dick was gone.

No words could describe what that parting was to me, nor the desolation of my solitary existence after his departure. In comparison with the aching void left in my heart then, the weary years I had passed with him at X Court might have been called happy. I had no one to love, no one to care for me, no one even to speak to. I had never cared much for James's society in the past, but how gladly would I have accepted his companionship now ! But even this solace was denied me. Since the first night of my arrival in that house, Dick and I had shared the same bedroom, and James had continued to sleep in the small curtainless bed where we had left him to his fate on that occasion. At breakfast of course I saw him ; but in the repressive presence of his father and Mr. Earle. He dined with his father at an eating-house in the City, and when he came upstairs after office hours at night, he retired with a bundle of papers into his father's private room, where he generally remained till bedtime. My existence appeared to be forgotten by everybody.

For the first two or three days after Dick left, my spirits were somewhat sustained by the constant anticipation that Mr. Earle's ward would soon arrive ; but two months passed away, and as I heard no more on the subject, I concluded that Mr. Earle had made some different arrangement. When this hope vanished, I sank into such a state of hopeless despondency, that I really believe it was only

my absolute lack of the requisite physical energy that prevented me from cutting short an existence so intolerable, by suicide.

I tried walking about the streets, but I had never been accustomed to walk without the support of Dick's strong arm, and though I had ceased to use my crutch in the house, I found I could not go far without it. I had not money enough to spend in cabs, and after two or three attempts, I gave up the idea of going out altogether; I passed the greater part of the day sitting on the window-seat that looked into the court, with a book in my hand, idly watching those who came and went, wondering for whom the letters were destined that I saw the postman take to the different houses, and whether there was any one else in the court as dull and useless as I was.

I became accustomed to consider my dinner a great event, and I contrived to prolong the meal to the utmost by reading as I eat; but Mrs. Withers soon found it too much trouble to lay the cloth downstairs for me only, and I was then compelled to eat my ill-dressed, unsightly meals at the greasy kitchen-table with her.

At first this was intolerable to me; but after a while I not only accustomed myself to her society, but even sank so low as to prefer it, and to join her of an evening in the consumption of the deleterious contents of the black teapot. I may, however, say in my excuse that at first I only remained in the kitchen as the warmest place, and took a sip or two of the "*blue ruin*" she loved, in order to put her at her ease and induce her to take her usual solace in my presence; but after a while I acquired a liking and desire for the physical stimulus of the dram itself. I soon found another attraction in Mrs. Withers' society, as unexpected as it was exciting to me. I had discovered that the effect of the old woman's evening potations upon her intellect and temper varied, according to their number and strength. In the first period of their influence, she was rather quarrelsome, and disposed to resent my remaining in the kitchen an unsolicited guest, and witness of her proceedings; then she would become tender and pitiful of my lonely and neglected state; and when I succeeded, as I soon learnt to do, in deceiving her as to the amount she had imbibed, and inducing her to exceed the quantity she had marked out for herself, her tongue became unloosened, her withered cheek flushed, her intellect sharpened, and forgetting her habits of secrecy and discretion, she would speak of the dismal secrets of the family, and allude to sorrow past, and wrong done, until she had roused my curiosity almost to frenzy. My days were agitated, and my nights feverish and restless. I clearly recognised the fact that I was injuring the poor old woman by thus increasing her drams: I could see how nervous and exhausted she appeared in the morning when I thus stimulated and excited her at night, but I could not forbear: I was determined I would never rest till I knew all she knew, and this determination was strengthened by the dis-

covery I quickly made that a portion of her secret concerned Dick. Gradually the whole dismal story of the past became clear to me. That story, pieced together from the old woman's disjointed confidences, was as follows :—

Stephen and Mary Earle were the children of Squire Earle, of B—— Grange, in Somersetshire ; Stephen by his first, and Mary by his second wife. The Squire, who was, Withers told me, “dreadful wild” in his youth, had sadly neglected Stephen’s mother, who died young. After her death the Squire continued his evil courses until “what with women, what with racing, and what with gambling,” B—— Grange came to the hammer. The Squire indeed was a ruined man, and compelled to sell every acre he possessed, except a small farm, which was so strictly entailed on Stephen, that his father could not sell it. To this farm the Squire betook himself, and lived there in great seclusion for two years. B—— Grange, with its pleasure grounds, but without the rest of the estate, had been bought by a retired Scotch merchant named McGregor. How it came to pass no one knew, but Mary McGregor, the only child and heiress of this gentleman, fell in love with the Squire, and married him within one month of her father’s death, which happened in the second year of their occupation of B—— Grange. Miss McGregor, a younger sister of the Scotch merchant, and the only surviving relative of the heiress, was excessively indignant at the match ; she refused to be present at the wedding, and returned to Scotland in great ire, telling her niece she would live to repent bestowing her father’s hard-earned money upon a broken-down *roué* and gambler ; for so she called the Squire, though he was scarcely fifty, and, according to old Withers’s report, “as fine a man to look at, Ned, as ever you’d meet on a long summer’s day. And he was an altered man, too, after he married,” she continued, “and never seemed to care for none of his old ways again ; and it is like they might have been very happy, but his young wife died, worse luck, when Mary—that’s your aunt—was born. Well, everybody thought the Squire would go right out of his mind with grief ; he wouldn’t so much as look at the poor baby, and as I had just lost my poor little one, the servants, remembering that I had nursed Stephen, thought it natural like to bring the poor thing to me.

“My father had been head gamekeeper to the Squire before he sold his estate, and I had married the under keeper ; we were now in the service of Lord M——, whose place was next to the Squire’s, and who bought most of the land when the sale was.

“Stephen had been sent to the grammar school at S——, and I mind the master always said what a sharp lad he was, and sure enough he turned out a deal too sharp for any of us, worse luck. The Squire went away to foreign parts, and the Grange was shut up

for years and years, and Mary stayed with me. When she was pretty near eight years old, the Squire came back without giving any notice, and came straight to our cottage—he had known the way well in my father's time, when it all belonged to him—and asked to see the baby. Just then little Mary came in for her tea, and the Squire cried like a child at the mere sight of her, and took her in his arms and asked her if she would go home with him. But she wouldn't stir a step without me, so the Squire paid my husband handsome, there and then, to let me go up to the Grange to live, to take care of her. And sure enough there was nothing except the money to make me stay; for if ever child was petted, and given way to, and spoiled outright, it was Mary. From having had her with me from a baby, I could do more with her than anybody else; but the servants couldn't abide her, for she soon found out that the Squire always took her part, and she treated them as if they were her born slaves. She had plenty of masters and mistresses, but I don't think she ever really learned much; for if they vexed her or tired her any way, she used to say her head ached, and the Squire was like to go out of his wits if ever she seemed pale, or even cross like.

"He used to say that when she was eighteen he should take her to London, and have her presented at Court, and that her beauty would buy back the rest of the family acres; and everybody knew he had made his will, making her his heir of all he had left, except Deane Farm, and that he couldn't leave. Deane Farm didn't bring in a clear two hundred a year, and most folks thought it wasn't fair to Stephen; but the Squire always said Stephen would make his own way, and that the Grange belonged to Mary of right, seeing how it had come back to him through her mother.

"When Stephen left school and came home, he and Mary quarrelled from morning till night, so the Squire packed him off again to S——, and had him put in a lawyer's office. Every soul in the neighbourhood cried out at that, but the Squire didn't care, not he.

"Stephen never came home no more till Mary was turned seventeen, and, Lord bless you, you wouldn't have known him. He flattered and petted Mary worse than any one, and talked to her of her beauty, and how she ought to hold her head high, and make up her mind not to be less than a countess, till the poor girl's head was turned worse than ever. Every day almost he took her out walking, and I noticed they always went one way, passing by the gamekeeper's house, on the land which Lord M—— had bought: where the Squire had sworn never to set his foot till it was his own again. Maybe I should have thought something wasn't altogether right, and have found out the mischief in time, if I hadn't been so full of trouble myself, but my poor husband was down with a fever, and all my thoughts was taken up with nursing. And so, though I often wondered how it was that Stephen and Mary used to pass the

keeper's lodge, (where I was then) every day, I thought nothing amiss. Then I began to notice that though Stephen went with her, she used to come back alone, and once or twice she looked flurried like, and I thought it was queer that she always took this particular walk just when the Squire was sound asleep after dinner, and my mind began to misgive. But I was not allowed to speak to them, for fear Mary should catch the fever. One night—it was just getting dark, for the nights came on early then, being the end of October—I opened my window for a little air, and I mind I was a-thinking how soon it would be all over with my poor John, when I heard Mary's voice underneath. I listened, and made out that she was crying. Then I heard some one kissing her, and telling her to keep up her spirits, and my heart flew to my mouth, for I knew it wasn't Stephen's voice. I thought I'd go and tell the Squire, but I didn't dare.

“That very night my poor husband died, and what with the funeral and getting the cottage cleaned up for the new keeper, it was more than a fortnight before I went back to the Grange. Then I heard from the servants that the young Lord had been down at the great house for the shooting, and it all came over me at once that it was Lord M——'s son who had been with Mary that night.

“Somehow or other I got courage to tell Mary what I had heard, and to say that, whatever was between them, his lordship ought to speak out like a man.

“First of all she went into such a passion as never was seen, but when she saw I wasn't afraid as usual, she coaxed and wheedled me into holding my tongue, and told me that the secret was only to be kept for three weeks longer, till my lord was of age; that he couldn't speak out before, because his father, being a Catholic, wouldn't like the match; and then she asked me whether I shouldn't like to be lady's maid to a countess, and I don't know what more, till I promised I wouldn't say nothing, worse luck.

“But the three weeks went by, and my lord never came back, and there was never a letter nor nothing to help Mary keep up her spirits. For a while she was full of hope; then she got angry; then she took to crying at nights as if she would break her heart, and in the day she was so dull and pale that the Squire was like to go beside himself.

“But that wasn't the worst, nor nobody knew the worst but me, till one day when the Squire read aloud out of the newspaper how young Lord M—— (he had some other title, I know, but I don't rightly remember what they called him) had just been married to some grand lady or other. Poor Mary fell down on the ground as if she'd been struck by lightning, and when she came to, she'd clean lost her wits. She raved about her child as if it had been born already, and begged and prayed the Squire and Stephen and me to go and fetch my lord, in a way that it would have broken any one's heart to hear her.

"But the Squire cursed both him and her, and rushed away out of the room like one mad; and never shall I forget Stephen's look then, nor the smile he had on his face as he watched him go.

"Still he did seem sorry for his sister, too, and said to me over and over again that he never thought it would come to that.

"'God only knows what you thought, sir, nor what you did,' I says to him; 'the girl's ruined, that's all I know; and the family, that has always held up its head as respectable as any in Somersetshire, is ruined too, worse luck.

"'Good God, Mrs. Withers, that's true!' he said; 'there isn't a cur in the village that won't yelp at our heels now.'

"Then he and I laid our heads together to see what could be done to hush the thing up; and we talked of one thing and another, till all at once Stephen said—

"'I've got it, Withers! I'll carry her upstairs now into her own room; and you'll give out to the servants that she's had a fit, and don't let anyone go into the room but yourself, mind, for the life of you. Keep everything dark for a little while, and I'll find a way to save our good name yet.'

"All that night the Squire kept himself to himself, shut up in his own room, and he wouldn't so much as answer a word, good or bad, when Stephen knocked at his door to speak with him.

"Next morning early I heard him go downstairs; and though I didn't dare show my face, I watched him out of the house into the shrubbery; and I went and called Stephen, and he followed him. It was hours and hours before the Squire came back into the house. Then I made bold to carry him some breakfast; but when I saw his face, the look of him frightened me. He seemed all shrunken away like, into a poor, trembling old man.

"I hadn't the heart to say anything to him; but I went to look for Stephen, to tell him that Mary was herself like, and quiet. But the other servants told me Stephen had taken his father's horse—he'd as soon have thought of riding the moon as riding his father's horse before that day—and gone to S——.

"Next day, when he came back, before he went to his father's room, he came upstairs to me to ask how Mary was. I told him she was quite herself, but that she never opened her lips.

"'That will do,' says he; 'make her get up and dress herself. All will come right yet.'

"Well, I couldn't make her stir; but I'd given way to her all her life, so it wasn't likely I should begin to be mistress over her then.

"Stephen came upstairs again in an hour, and went into her room. I could hear her answer him sharp enough at first, like she used to do in the old days; but he mastered her somehow at last—God knows how!

"When he came out again, he said to me—

"Go and dress her, Withers; she won't make any more difficulties."

"And sure enough she let me dress her, as quiet as a lamb, though the tears were running down her cheeks all the while. I could see she was making up her mind to something; but she never said a word to me.

"Presently the great bell rang, and I looked out of the window and saw young Prescott—that's your uncle, Ned—driving up the sweep in a gig. Prescott was clerk to the same lawyer that Stephen had been with at S——. When I said who it was Mary shivered all over, and, throwing her arms round my neck, she began crying again as if her heart would break, and saying: 'Oh, Withers! I can't—I can't!' till I began crying, too, for company, though I didn't guess what she meant.

"Then up came Stephen again, and said she was to go downstairs directly.

"Lord bless you, sir," says I; "just look what a state she's in."

"But he went up to Mary, and, taking her by the wrist, he said—

"Now, Mary, this is no time for nonsense. The young man's here. Am I to say yes or no?"

"Poor Mary shook like a leaf, and she looked up at him one moment so pitiful that I don't know how he could bear it; but he kept on saying—

"Yes or no? Choose for yourself, you know! Yes or no?"

"Then all at once she started up, and said 'Yes.' And I bathed her eyes with eau-de-cologne, and she went downstairs with Stephen. I could hear him talking to her all the way, telling her all he did was for her own good, and the like; but I think she didn't rightly hear him, nor know what she was about.

"My mind misgave me that Stephen would make matters worse for everyone but himself, and I went and listened at the door; but I couldn't hear what they said. Then I sat on the stairs, just at the corner in the dark, where no one could see me, till the Squire and Stephen and Prescott all came out together; and I heard the Squire say—

"Well, Mr. Prescott, since this matter is settled, there is no occasion you and I should meet again until the day."

"Prescott bowed, but he didn't say a word; and I saw him get into the gig again and drive away; and I mind how Stephen stood looking after him, smiling to himself, and rubbing his hands. As for the Squire, he went back to his own room again without a word, good or bad, to anyone.

"Next morning Stephen went off on a journey, and he was gone pretty near a fortnight. All that time the Squire stayed in his own room, and Mary stayed in hers; and they never so much as saw each other except at meals, when the servants were in the room. Every

one of the servants had something to say, but never one of 'em guessed the real truth.

"When Stephen came back, Mary and I were packed off to Miss McGregor in Scotland. How Stephen had managed to get her into the plot, I don't know; for she had never taken any sort of notice of the family since the day she left the Grange, just before Mary's mother was married to the Squire, in spite of her. I suppose it was her pride that made her willing to help to hush things up, for they say the Scotch are awful proud.

"Mary had a hard time of it while we were there; for every time Prescott came a-courting—which he had to do for the look of the thing—she was like to go into a fit. She, that had always had her own way in every single thing, found it mortal hard to stoop now. She and Miss McGregor quarrelled from morning to night, for her aunt was never tired of telling her how she ought to be ready for any sacrifice to hide her shame; and sure enough they must have given Prescott a pretty sum to make him put up with all he had to bear. Never a day passed that I did not expect him to be off his bargain; but married they were at the end of the month, worse luck! and the Squire came to the wedding, so that people shouldn't talk. I heard tell, too, that Stephen had the bells rung and bonfires lighted at the old place, to throw dust in people's eyes.

"When the Squire came, I could see plain enough that his troubles was nearly over. He hung down his head and walked with a stick, which I never saw him do before. He said never a word to Mary; but I most think that was her fault, for she held her head high, and sulked like. Miss McGregor spoke softer to the Squire than ever I thought it was in her to do; but folks did say she had wanted him for herself once, for all she had talked so against him. But, whether or no, I am sure anybody's heart must have ached to see how broken down he looked.

"When the coach came to the door, after the breakfast—and, lord! what a breakfast that was!—I don't believe anyone ate a mouthful, but for show, like—Mary walked away, very proud and stiff; but when she got to the door, she turned round all at once and looked at the Squire. I suppose there was something in his look that broke her spirit, for she ran up to him, and threw herself on her knees before him, calling out—

"'Oh, father! father! kiss me before I go.'

"The Squire stretched out his arms towards her, and we all of us thought he tried to bid God bless her; but no one could be sure what he meant to say, for he fell down in a fit of some sort, and though he lived for two days after that, he never spoke again, and I doubt if he rightly knew any of us. We wrote to Stephen; and he and old Potter, the lawyer from S——, came to Miss McGregor's with the will. When Potter began to read it, Stephen stopped him, and told

him, very sharp, he was making a mistake, and had no need to read the old will.

"'Old will!' says Potter. 'Your father never made any other will than this, that I know of.'

"Well, Stephen cursed and swore like mad that it was all a trick, and that the Squire had solemnly promised him to make a new will, leaving the Grange to him; but the old lawyer declared the Squire had never made any will but the one he had there, which he declared he had drawn up himself just after Mary was born, and in which every stick and stone of her mother's property was left her in her own right. Stephen was in such a rage that he was very near letting the cat out of the bag, after all; for he turned to Prescott, and said—

"'You know as well as I do that the bargain was that you were to get Miss McGregor's money down, and I was to have the Grange.'

"Prescott pretended he did not know what he meant, and I could see the old lawyer pricked up his ears when he heard talk of a bargain, and then Miss McGregor said, 'My money isn't paid down yet, Mr. Stephen, and I'll stand by you; for you are the only son, and it's my opinion the property ought to have gone to you.'

"Then Stephen seemed to take heart to put a good face on the matter; for he said he wished Prescott joy of his good luck. I suppose the truth of the matter was, that Stephen had worked upon the old Squire to make the promise just when he was in the worst of his rage, but that afterwards the old man hadn't the heart to keep his word.

"When Prescott came back from his wedding trip, he and Miss McGregor and Stephen were closeted together for hours and hours, and quarrelling like mad all the time; but I know the end of it was that things went against Prescott, for what could he do against Stephen, and with Miss McGregor to back him, too? At last it was settled we were all to come to London together; poor Mary begged me not to leave her, and Stephen and Prescott both said they'd make it worth my while; for they didn't want no other servants to tittle-tattle their affairs all over the neighbourhood. I had none of my own left to care for, and I'd always been used to take care of poor Mary ever since she was a baby, so it seemed natural like to stop with her then.

"Well, it wasn't till we got to London, and I saw *Prescott and Earle* painted up on the door below, that I knew the two were to be partners, but I'm pretty sure it was Miss McGregor who managed that.

"There was little business enough at first, and only two clerks in the office, just for show; but now the office is full of them, and neither your uncle nor Stephen don't seem to have even a thought in their heads but money-getting, though the Lord knows what good

their money does them, living in the hugger-muggering way they do, and never a creature to visit them from year's end to year's end.

"Poor Dick was born a month after we came here, worse luck, and your uncle took such a dislike to the child, that if Mary had led him a dog's life when we were in Scotland before marriage, sure enough he paid her off then. Sometimes I almost thought Mary herself wished the poor baby dead. Still it is my belief that your uncle would have been kind to Mary if she would have let him, like; but she regular despised him, and angered him till matters grew so bad between them that Mary ran away, and then—Lord bless us!—I thought Prescott would have gone out of his mind. If he'd loved her ever so much he couldn't have been at more trouble to find her. And find her he did at last, and brought her back; but the Lord knows that, after that, her life was worse than before, for she was shut up for all the world like a prisoner in a jail till after James was born. It's pretty sure that matters might have mended then, if poor Mary could have kept her temper, or held her tongue; for your uncle loved the boy from the first, and even grew kinder to Dick. But Mary couldn't bear the poor baby, and it was a puny and sickly thing to be sure. She didn't nurse it, nor scarcely look at it, and that made Prescott savage again.

"When James was two years old, Mary ran away again, but I always thought Stephen was at the bottom of it that time; for they used to be shut up together, talking, and signing papers, and such like, whenever Prescott was out. I never said anything—where would have been the good?—but I thought Stephen was up to some mischief.

"However, he pretended to be as surprised as anybody when Mary was missed, and told Prescott it was all his own fault for making the house like a hell. What makes me think he managed it is, that all your uncle could do he never got no clue to her this time. But a year afterwards there came a letter to Stephen from a priest somewhere in foreign parts—I don't rightly know where—to say she was dead. They said, too, she turned a Catholic before she died; maybe she did, for she'd always had a fancy for their outlandish religion ever since she knew Lord M——. The same priest told Stephen in the letter the name of the lawyer that had her will. And sure enough there the will was, leaving everything to Stephen, and nothing at all to poor Dick.

"I always pitied poor Mary, and loved her too, through all her tempers, for well I knew how the Squire had spoiled her when she was a girl, and what a life she had led of it since; but I could not get over that. It didn't seem like a mother to leave that poor innocent boy to be beaten and bullied by Prescott, who hated him, natural like; but you may be sure Stephen was somehow at the bottom of it, for didn't he get the Grange by it, though what good does it do him?

The place is let to strangers, and he lives here all the year round just as he did before. I always thought Mary would leave it to Dick, to make amends like ; but bless you the poor lad don't so much as know there is such a place, and all his thought is to be a soldier. I never did believe till it came to the point, that Stephen would buy him a commission, and once or twice I almost thought I'd make bold myself to call upon Lord M—— about it ; but it's well I didn't, for the lad's so proud like, that if folks should ever know, and come to jeer and mock at him because he is only a love-child, why he might do hisself a mischief, and that would be a pity, for he's a fine fellow to look at, and may make a figure some day if nothing shouldn't never come out ; and it ain't his own fault that he's nobody's son like, worse luck."

CHAPTER V.

"But that it eats our victuals, I should think
This were a fairy."—SHAKESPEARE.

I BELIEVE it would be almost impossible for any one, who has passed a tolerably varied existence, to realise the effect of Mrs. Withers's indiscreet confidences upon one brought up as I had been. Naturally fanciful and nervous, these defects had been increased by my physical weakness, and by the unnatural life I had led during my mournful boyhood. After Dick's departure had left me companionless, I had gradually accustomed myself to seek refuge from the intolerable monotony of X Court in a dream-land of my own creation, which I naturally endeavoured to render as unlike the reality as possible. This resource was now denied me, for the knowledge of the ugly truths of Mrs. Withers's tale oppressed me so much as to deprive my own imaginings of all power to charm, and, by dwelling incessantly upon one painful subject, I reduced myself to a condition of positive mental disease. This morbid state of mind was darkened by the conviction I felt, that although Mrs. Withers had probably told me all she knew, she had certainly not told me all she suspected. She still occasionally threw out dark hints against Earle, which kept my curiosity on the stretch ; but no entreaties could prevail upon her to speak more plainly. She would shake her head at times, and say, "It ain't all plain and above board even now. Mary never left the Grange away from Dick for nothing ;" but when I urged her to explain her meaning, she would grow irritable and suspicious, and say, "Lord, don't talk nonsense, lad ; don't bother me about Stephen ; what should I know of his doings ? You don't suppose he tells nothing to the likes of me, do you ?"

At length the unexpected happiness of Dick's return to spend a week at X Court turned my thoughts for a while from Mrs.

Withers's revelations. He had only been nine months away, yet he appeared much struck with the change in my health, and although the contrast from the activity and excitement of his new life must have made X Court appear more dreary than ever to him, he devoted himself to me precisely as he had done in the old days; revisited, apparently with as much pleasure as I did, our old haunts at Hampstead and Highgate, and listened, with all his former patience, if not with all his former faith, to my visions of a poetic fame, never, alas, to be realised!

On one of these occasions we met two young officers with whom Dick had lately made acquaintance—Lieutenant Beauchamp and Captain St. John, scions of an aristocracy which I had never learned to consider "*bloated*," and whom I regarded, although they were ignorant, trifling youngsters enough, as glorified beings, of a superior race; so that I wondered greatly to see Dick so calm under the immortal honour of walking and talking with them for half an hour, under the gaze of the plebeian crowd of donkey-drivers and nursery-maids upon Hampstead Heath.

When we returned to X Court, however, my spirits sank below their ordinary level. Wearied with the unusual exertion of the walk, and depressed by the thought that on the Monday following (it was then Saturday) my hero must return to the scene of his glory at W——, where his regiment was quartered, so that I should be again alone, I threw myself upon the hideous old horsehair sofa—the rack of that torture-chamber—in a fit of gloom I could not overcome. Dick seated himself near me, and endeavoured to rouse me by proposing that I should repeat verses to him, or tell him the plan of a tale, as it had been my wont to do in past times. Then lighting his now unprohibited cigar, he settled himself to listen.

The day was drawing to its close; the sky was overcast, the air oppressively hot, while bright and constant flashes of lightning announced a coming storm. A strange, perverse impulse prompted me to relate to Dick the story of his own birth. I struggled against it, but it was too strong to be resisted; I tried to shape together the incidents of a tale I had lately read; in vain. Dick's story seemed to force itself upon my memory, to the exclusion of every other; and, as it were in spite of myself, I related to him a highly coloured, melodramatic version of the facts Mrs. Withers had told me, though I was at least sufficiently master of myself to alter the names both of places and individuals. Meanwhile the storm had increased in fury, and the room, except when illumined by the vivid flashes of lightning, was perfectly dark. It may have been the effect of the weather upon my nerves, it may have been the presence of the unconscious victim of the tale that inspired me; but I believe I must have told it well, for Dick certainly listened with an eagerness of interest very unusual in him. Excited by the effect I pro-

duced, and warming with my own eloquence, I was tempted to introduce a supernatural conclusion in the apparition of the dead mother to her son, to implore his forgiveness for her fault and urge him to vengeance against the unnatural brother who had twice taken such cruel advantage of her wretchedness.

"Ah," said Dick, "if I had been the fellow, I should not have wanted a voice from the dead to teach me to punish the brute."

My heart stood still within me, for as he uttered the words a vivid flash of lightning revealed to me the face of Stephen Earle standing behind the speaker. The sense of my own imprudence, combined with the ghastly effect of the weird light in which I saw his face, completely took away my self-possession. Seizing Dick's arm, with a cry of terror, I gasped out, "Dick, Dick—your uncle—he is there!"

"Well, what of that?" said Dick, coolly. "Why, Ned, how you tremble! Uncle," he added, "why don't you speak? You have frightened poor Ned out of his wits, by coming in in that silent way."

The only answer was a violent clap of thunder, during which I clung still more tightly to Dick.

"Let go, Ned," he said; "I'll light the lamp."

He shook me off, and quickly lighting the lamp, raised it to look round the room. Mr. Earle was not there, and the door was shut.

"There's no one here," he said, half angrily; "you see it's all your fancy."

"Oh no, no!" I cried, shuddering; "it was no fancy."

"Well, but even if uncle was in the room, there's nothing strange, or—why, Ned, poor Ned," he added, looking in dismay at my white face, "what can be the matter? are you ill?"

"Oh, it's nothing," said I, trying to recover myself; "I was only startled,—that's all."

I tried to laugh it off, and pretended to be persuaded that it had indeed been nothing but my own fancy; but I was uneasy and anxious at heart, for I knew that Earle must have heard Dick's words at that time. But, after all, I was not certain that he had heard my story, and if not, Dick's speech would have made no impression upon him. Moreover, the composure of Dick's manner must have convinced him that he at least had no suspicion of the truth. Then again, when I asked myself what reason he could have for stealing upon us in that way, I almost began to hope that I might have been mistaken.

I sat pondering these things in my own mind until Dick, wearied out by my silence, laid his head down upon the table and fell asleep. Then it struck me that I would go and ask Withers what time Mr. Earle had come home. It was his habit, when he returned, to ring immediately for Mrs. Withers to carry the candles, a clay pipe, and a kettle of hot water into his private room, and to sit there with

a glass of gin and water by his side, reading or writing until late in the night.

I stole softly out of the room to avoid waking Dick, and went upstairs into Mrs. Withers's kitchen.

The old woman had stirred the fire into a bright blaze, and shut the shutters, probably because the lightning frightened her, and by her side stood the black teapot I knew so well. She had, however, indulged far beyond her wont, perhaps with a view of keeping up her spirits during the storm, for when I inquired of her if Mr. Earle had come in, I could get no answer from her. She continued to doze in the high-backed, old-fashioned nursing-chair, which she had conveyed from my aunt's room into the kitchen for her own use. Her dirty cap had fallen off; her uncombed grey hair lay in straggling disorder on her shoulders, while the occasional twitchings of her begrimed and wrinkled visage, which accompanied the half-snoring sighs indicative of uneasy dreaming, rendered the poor old body a far from attractive sight.

Determined to make her answer if it were possible, I shook her roughly by the arm, saying,

"Has Mr. Earle come in?"

The old woman opened her dull eyes, and looking half sternly, half stupidly upon me, said slowly,

"Why don't Stephen see after the child?"

"The child, Withers! what child? There's no child here."

"Don't tell me," she replied, angrily, rousing herself sufficiently to take a good pull at the teapot. "I tell you there's been foul play somewhere."

Having delivered this with the oracular dignity of drunkenness, she dozed off again with her mouth wide open; nor could I, with all my efforts, obtain another articulate syllable from her.

I decided to watch Earle's looks at breakfast next morning, and note if there were any peculiarity in his manner either towards Dick or myself. I thought nothing of Mrs. Withers's words at the time; but I had too often reason to remember them afterwards.

The next day was Sunday. I was too much exhausted with the journey to Hampstead, and the emotion that had succeeded it, to go out; and Dick, unwilling to leave me on the last day, determined to stay at home also.

I saw nothing unusual in Mr. Earle's manner at breakfast time, except that he was extremely cordial to Dick, inquiring as to the progress of his studies and the acquaintances he had formed at W——, with much apparent interest. My uncle, on the contrary, appeared colder than ever; he scarcely nodded in answer to Dick's "Good morning," and continued, as usual, to read the paper in silence. James and I gazed and listened in undisguised admiration; but neither of us presumed to take any share in the conversation.

Even in former days, Dick's absolute indifference to Mr. Earle's sneering manner, which was crushing to our weaker spirits, had been a source of mingled admiration and astonishment to us; but now that all trace even of boyish awkwardness had vanished in the handsome, self-possessed young man before us, we regarded him as a being of a different order. I believe Dick was really unconscious of the change in himself; his manner to us was precisely what it had been before; but after we had seen him actually taking the lead in conversation with Mr. Earle, and listened to with respectful attention by one who was still a sort of abhorred and dreaded potentate in our eyes, we felt it almost impossible to resume our former intimacy with him. When Earle and Prescott left the room, therefore, we had an uneasy sense that we were not equal to the occasion. How could we treat the brilliant butterfly before us with the easy familiarity that had been natural enough towards the grub? Conversation languished, books were resorted to, and the day we had intended to enjoy so much, dragged through heavily enough for us all.

In the evening Dick and I were actually reduced to kneeling on the window-seat and gazing wearily into the court below, as we had so often done when children. At last our attention was attracted by the very unusual sight (on a Sunday especially) of a cab driving in under the low archway at the other end. To our astonishment it drew up at our door. "It must be a mistake," said Dick, opening the window, "for there's a lady in the cab."

"Fancy, if it should be my uncle's Italian ward," said I, greatly excited.

Even James rose from his book at the suggestion, and came to the window.

Attracted by the light and the sound of voices at the open window, the lady looked up, and asked, in English,

"Is this Mr. Earle's?"

"This is *Prescott* and Earle's," answered James.

Upon hearing this the cabman rang the bell, and prepared to take down the boxes from the top of the cab; while Dick, after shouting to Mrs. Withers to put a light in the hall on the first floor, ran down the staircase to help the lady out of the cab and show her the way.

"Can it be the Italian?" said I to James; "she speaks like an Englishwoman."

At this moment she entered the room, Dick leading the way, and assuring her, in answer to her evident hesitation, that it was all right.

I believe we have most of us known, at some period of our lives, what it is to meet a person whom one has the absolute certainty of seeing for the first time, and yet to find the face so familiar as to suggest the most perplexing theories of the possibility of our having

met in some former stage of existence. Dim recollections appear to arise within us, which, in spite of ourselves, we constantly expect will assume a distinct and satisfactory form, enabling us at last to recall the occasion upon which the apparently well-known features were stamped upon our memory.

Such were my sensations as I stood gazing in bewilderment at Mr. Earle's beautiful ward. Even the very sound of her voice struck upon my ear like a remote but unforbidden music, as in a tone of dismay, not unmingled with disgust, she said to Dick,—

"Do you mean to say I am to live here?"

Neither James nor I had power to utter a syllable, but Dick replied in a tone of sympathy, "I do not wonder you are surprised; it is indeed a melancholy hole for you to come to: but of course Mr. Earle will do something to make the place more habitable now you are here." At the same time he placed the least uncomfortable of the old horsehair chairs nearer to the fire for her, and stirred the coal into a blaze.

She sat down with an air of dejection, and stretched out her little feet (how utterly fairy-like and wonderful those feet appeared to me!) to the comforting warmth; then glancing for the first time at James and me, she asked,

"Are these your brothers, Mr. Earle?"

"This is my brother James," he answered, smiling; "and this is my cousin, Edward Lovel; my name is Prescott."

It was the first time I had heard him call himself by that name since I knew the story of his birth, and I felt a pang at my heart when he said it. I hid my confusion, however, under an awkward bow.

At this moment Mrs Withers entered the room with the eternal broom in her hand, and going up to Dick said in a sullen and defiant tone,

"Come now, Dick lad, you must just carry Miss's boxes to her room yourself, for it's more than I can do."

As she concluded, her eye fell upon the face of the young stranger, who turned her head round in evident surprise at the old woman's unceremonious address. A ghastly change came over her countenance as, advancing one step nearer, and shading her eyes with her trembling hand, she ejaculated,

"The Lord save us! who are you?"

The young lady started out of her chair with a little cry like a frightened bird, but before any of us could say a word in explanation, we heard Mr. Earle's voice in the hall, calling out,

"Here, Betty Withers, come here I say; whose boxes are these? Has any lady come?"

"There is my uncle," said Dick, anxious to turn the young lady's attention from the old woman, for her varying colour showed how

much she was agitated by her strange address. "Go and get the lady's room ready, Withers," he added, gently pushing her out.

Mr. Earle entered hastily, and with certainly no look of welcome on his face, as he said,

"So you have persisted in coming over in spite of me?"

This was too much. The poor girl, who was doubtless already exhausted by her journey, and evidently painfully impressed by her new abode, even before the agitation produced by the witch-like apparition and unaccountable conduct of Mrs. Withers, burst into tears.

"Good God!" said Dick, turning fiercely on Mr. Earle, "what do you mean by receiving a guest in this way? Have patience, madam," he continued, addressing her in a soothing and respectful tone; "we are not *all* of us either mad or brutal here."

"By what right do you interfere between me and Miss Paton, sir?" said Earle, furiously.

"By the right and duty which binds a gentleman to protect a lady," said Dick, calmly.

"Gentleman, you!" sneered Earle; then recovering himself by a strong effort, he said, "You are right in reminding me that this lady is my guest, for she has acted in this matter with such utter disregard of my—I will not say commands, but of my most earnest advice, that I was driven to forget it. Believe me, Miss Paton," he continued, addressing the still sobbing girl, "I had no intention to annoy or offend you."

At this moment James, who had left the room unnoticed, re-entered with a decanter of wine, the first I had ever seen offered to a visitor in that house. He must have been to his father's room for it, for it was a luxury denied to us lads. He was too modest to offer it himself, but putting it into Dick's hand he retired behind him.

Dick gently urged a glass of wine upon the weeping girl: she took a little, and then recovering herself, she answered Mr. Earle, firmly,

"Yes, I have come because my mother——"

"Well, well," interrupted Earle, hastily, "we will not talk business to-night. I was wrong: I beg your pardon. You are, of course, heartily welcome here. But you must be tired, and we must see what we can give you for supper before you go to your room."

"Oh, I cannot eat any supper," she said; "the wine has done me good. Pray let me go to bed now; I am dreadfully tired."

After a few polite but cold words of persuasion, Mr. Earle allowed his ward to retire supperless to bed.

Dick summoned Mrs. Withers, who appeared to have recovered her usual composure, for addressing Miss Paton she said,

"This way, ma'am; there's a nice fire a-burning in your room, and it ain't neither cold nor damp; though it looks so dull like."

Miss Paton bowed gravely to us all, and then with a sad smile

that seemed to appeal to him to continue his protection, she gave her hand to Dick.

Without a word to any of us, Mr. Earle then turned on his heel and left the room.

As the door closed behind him, Dick, James, and I gazed on one another in silent consternation. "What will become of her here?" said Dick, at last, giving utterance to the thought that was in all our hearts. "What can such an exquisite, delicate creature do in this dungeon?"

At that moment we heard Mrs. Withers come out of the bedroom, and as if by common consent, though no one spoke, we all hurried out to meet her.

"Is she quieter now, Withers?" said Dick.

"She's a-crying herself to sleep, I think, poor lamb," replied the old woman, shaking her head; "and she ain't the first, neither, that has cried herself to sleep in that room, worse luck."

(To be continued.)

FINDING THE WAY AT SEA.

THE wreck of the *Atlantic*, followed closely by that of the *City of Washington* nearly on the same spot, has led many to inquire into the circumstances on which depends a captain's knowledge of the position of his ship. In each case, though not in the same way, the ship was supposed to be far from land, when in reality quite close to it. In each case, in fact, the ship had oversailed her reckoning. A slight exaggeration of what travellers so much desire—a rapid passage—proved the destruction of the ship, and in one case occasioned a fearful loss of life. And although such events are fortunately infrequent in Atlantic voyages, yet the bare possibility that besides ordinary sea risks a ship is exposed to danger from simply losing her way, suggests unpleasant apprehensions as to the general reliability of the methods in use for determining where a ship is, and her progress from day to day.

I propose to give a brief sketch of the methods in use for finding the way at sea, in order that the general principles on which safety depends may be recognised by the general reader.

It is known, of course, to everyone, that a ship's course and rate of sailing are carefully noted throughout her voyage. Every change of her course is taken account of, as well as every change in her rate of advance, whether under sail or steam or both combined. If all this could be quite accurately managed, the position of the ship at any hour could be known, because it would be easy to mark down on a chart the successive stages of her journey, from the moment when she left port. But a variety of circumstances render this impossible.

To begin with, the *exact* course of a ship cannot be known, because there is only the ship's compass to determine her course by, and a ship's compass is not an instrument affording perfectly exact indications. Let any one on a sea voyage observe the compass for a short time, being careful not to break the good old rule which forbids speech to the "man at the wheel," and he will presently become aware of the fact that the ship is not kept rigidly to one course even for a short time. The steersman keeps her as near as he can to a particular course, but she is continually deviating, now a little on one side now a little on the other of the intended direction; and even the general accuracy with which that course is followed is a matter of estimation, and depends on the skill of the individual steersman. Looking at the compass card, in steady weather, a course may seem very closely followed; perhaps the needle's end may not be a hundredth part of

an inch (on the average) from the position it should have. But a hundredth part of an inch on the circumference of the compass card, would correspond to a considerable deviation in the course of a run of twenty or thirty knots ; and there is nothing to prevent the errors so arising from accumulating in a long journey until a ship might be thirty or forty miles from her estimated place. To this may be added the circumstance that the direction of the needle is different in different parts of the earth. In some places it points to the east of the north, in others to the west. And although the actual "variation of the compass," as this peculiarity is called, is known in a general way for all parts of the earth, yet such knowledge has no claim to actual exactness. There is, also, an important danger, as recent instances have shown, in the possible change of the position of the ship's compass, on account of iron in her cargo.

But a far more important cause of error, in determinations merely depending on the log-book, is that arising from uncertainty as to the ship's rate of progress. The log-line gives only a rough idea of the ship's rate at the time when the log is cast ;* and of course a ship's rate does not remain constant, even when she is under steam alone. Then again, currents carry the ship along sometimes with considerable rapidity ; and the log-line affords no indication of their action : while no reliance can be placed on the estimated rates even of known currents. Thus the distance made on any course may differ considerably from the estimated distance ; and when several days' sailing are dealt with an error of large amount may readily accumulate.

For these and other reasons, a ship's captain places little reliance on what is called, "the day's work," that is, the change in the ship's position from noon to noon as estimated from the compass courses entered in the log-book, and the distances supposed to be run on these courses. It is absolutely essential that such estimates should be carefully made, because under unfavourable conditions of weather there may be no other means of guessing at the ship's position. But the only really reliable way of determining a ship's place is by astronomical observations. It is on this account that the almanac published by the Admiralty, in which the position and apparent motions of the celestial bodies are indicated four or five years in advance, is called, *par excellence*, the *Nautical Almanac*. The astronomer in his fixed observatory finds this almanac essential to the prosecution

* The log is a flat piece of wood of quadrantal shape, so loaded at the rim as to float with the point (that is, the centre of the quadrant) uppermost. To this a line about 800 yards long is fastened. The log is thrown overboard and comes almost immediately to rest on the surface of the sea, the line being suffered to run freely out. Marks on the log-line divide it into equal spaces, called *knots*, of known length, and by observing how many of these run out, while the sand in a half-minute hour-glass is running, the ship's rate of motion is inferred. The whole process is necessarily rough, since the line cannot even be tautened.

of his observations; the student of theoretical astronomy has continual occasion to refer to it: but to the sea-captain the Nautical Almanac has a far more important use. The lives of sailors and passengers are dependent upon its accuracy. It is, again, chiefly for the sailor that our great nautical observatories have been erected and that our Astronomer-Royal and his officers are engaged. What other work they may do is subsidiary and as it were incidental. Their chief work is to time this great clock, our earth, and so to trace the motions of those celestial indices which afford our fundamental time-measures, as to ensure as far as possible the safety of our navy, royal and mercantile.*

Let us see how this is brought about, not indeed inquiring into the processes by which at the Greenwich Observatory the elements of safety are obtained, but considering the method by which a seaman makes use of these elements.

In the measures heretofore considered, the captain of a ship in reality relies on terrestrial measurements. He reasons that being on such and such a day in a given place, and having in the interval sailed so many miles in such and such directions, he must at the time being be in such and such a place. This is called "navigation." In the processes next to be considered, which constitute a part of the science of Nautical Astronomy, the seaman trusts to celestial observations independently of all terrestrial measurements.

The points to be determined by the voyager are his latitude and longitude. The latitude is the distance north or south of the equator, and is measured always from the equator in degrees, the distance from equator to pole being divided into ninety equal parts, each of which is a degree.† The longitude is the distance east or west of Greenwich (in English usage, but other nations employ a different starting-point for measuring longitudes from). Longitude is not measured in miles, but in degrees. The way of measuring is not very readily explained without a globe or diagrams, but may be thus indicated:—Suppose a circle to run completely round the earth,

* This consideration has been altogether lost sight of in certain recent propositions for extending government aid to astronomical inquiries of another sort. It may be a most desirable thing that government should find means for inquiring into the physical condition of sun and moon, planets and comets, stars and all the various orders of star-clusters. But if such matters are to be studied at government expense, it should be understood that the inquiry is undertaken with the sole purpose of advancing our knowledge of these interesting subjects, and should not be brought into comparison with the utilitarian labours for which our Royal Observatory was founded.

† Throughout this explanation all minuter details are neglected. In reality, in consequence of the flattening of the earth's globe, the degrees of latitude are not equal, being larger the farther we go from the equator. Moreover, strictly speaking, it is incorrect to speak of distances being divided into degrees, or to say that a degree of latitude or longitude contains so many miles; yet it is so exceedingly inconvenient to employ any other way of speaking in popular description, that I trust any astronomers or mathematicians who may read this article, will forgive this solecism.

through Greenwich and both the poles; now if this circle be supposed free to turn upon the polar axis, or on the poles as pivots, and the half which crosses Greenwich be carried (the nearest way round) till it crosses some other station, then the arc through which it is carried is called the longitude of the station, and the longitude is easterly or westerly according as this half circle has to be shifted towards the east or west. A complete half-turn is 180 degrees, and by taking such a half-turn either eastwardly or westwardly, the whole surface of the earth is included. Points which are 180 degrees east of Greenwich are thus also 180 degrees west of Greenwich.

So much is premised in the way of explanation to make the present paper complete; but ten minutes' inspection of an ordinary terrestrial globe will show the true meaning of latitude and longitude more clearly (to those who happen to have forgotten what they learned at school on these points) than any verbal description.

Now it is sufficiently easy for a sea-captain in fine weather to determine his latitude. For places in different latitudes have different celestial scenery, if one may so describe the aspect of the stellar heavens by night and the course traversed by the sun by day. The height of the pole-star above the horizon, for instance, at once indicates the latitude very closely, and would indicate the latitude exactly if the pole-star were exactly at the pole instead of being merely close to it. But the height of any known star when due south also gives the latitude. For at every place in a given latitude, a star rises to a given greatest height when due south; if we travel farther south the star will be higher when due south; if we travel farther north it will be lower; and thus its observed height shows just how far north of the equator any northerly station is, while if the traveller is in the southern hemisphere corresponding observations show how far to the south of the equator he is.

But commonly the seaman trusts to observation of the sun to give him his latitude. The observation is made at noon, when the sun is highest above the horizon. The actual height is determined by means of the instrument called the sextant. This instrument need not be here described; but thus much may be mentioned to explain that process of taking the sun's meridian latitude which no doubt every one has witnessed who has taken a long sea journey. The sextant is so devised that the observer can see two objects at once, one directly and the other after reflection of its light; and the amount by which he has to move a certain bar carrying the reflecting arrangement, in order to bring the two objects into view in the same direction, shows him the real divergence of lines drawn from his eye to the two objects. To take the sun's altitude then with this instrument, the observer takes the sun as one object and the horizon directly below the sun as the other: he brings them into view together, and then looking at the sextant to see how much he has

had to move the swinging arm which carries the reflecting glasses, he learns how high the sun is. This being done at noon, with proper arrangements to ensure that the greatest height then reached by the sun is observed, at once indicates the latitude of the observer. Suppose, for example, he finds the sun to be forty degrees above the horizon, and the Nautical Almanac tells him that at the time the sun is ten degrees north of the celestial equator, then he knows that the celestial equator is thirty degrees above the southern horizon. The pole of the heavens is therefore sixty degrees above the northern horizon, and the voyager is in sixty degrees north latitude. Of course, in all ordinary cases, the number of degrees is not exact, as I have here for simplicity supposed, and there are some niceties of observation which would have to be taken into account, in real work. But the principle of the method is sufficiently indicated by what has been said, and no useful purpose could be served by considering minutiae.

Unfortunately, the longitude is not determined so readily. The very circumstance which makes the determination of the latitude so simple introduces the great difficulty which exists in finding the longitude. I have said that all places in the same latitude have the same celestial scenery; and precisely for this reason it is difficult to distinguish one such place from another, that is, to find on what part of its particular latitude-circle any place may lie.

If we consider, however, how longitude is measured, and what it really means, we shall readily see where a solution of the difficulty is to be sought. The latitude of a station means how far towards either pole the station is; its longitude means how far round the station is from some fixed longitude. But it is by turning round on her axis that the earth causes the changes which we call day and night; and therefore these must happen at different times in places at different distances round. For example, it is clear that if it is noon at one station it must be midnight at a station half way round from the former. And if anyone at one station could telegraph to a person at another, "It is exactly noon here," while this latter person knew from his clock or watch, that it was exactly midnight where *he* was, then he would know that he was half-way round exactly. He would, in fact, know his longitude from the other station. And so with smaller differences. The earth turns we know from west to east,—that is, a place lying due west of another is so carried as presently to occupy the place which its easterly neighbour had before occupied, while this last place has gone farther east yet. Let us suppose an hour is the time required to carry a westerly station to the position which had been occupied by a station to the east of it. Then manifestly every celestial phenomenon depending on the earth's turning will occur an hour later at the westerly station. Sunrise and sunset are phenomena of this kind. If I telegraph to a friend

at some station far to the west, but in the same latitude, "the sun is rising here," and he finds that he has to wait exactly an hour before the sun rises there, then he knows that he is one hour west of me in longitude, a most inexact yet very convenient and unmistakable way of speaking. As there are twenty-four hours in the day, while a complete circle running through my station and his (and everywhere in the same latitude) is supposed to be divided into 360 degrees, he is 15 degrees (a 24th part of 360) west of me; and if my station is Greenwich, he is in what we, in England, call 15 degrees west longitude.*

But what is true of sunrise and sunset in the same latitudes and in different longitudes, is true of noon whatever the latitude may be. And of course it is true of the southing of any known star. Only unfortunately one cannot tell the exact instant when either the sun or a star is due south or at its highest above the horizon. Still, speaking generally, and for the moment limiting our attention to noon, every station towards the west has noon later, while every station towards the east has noon earlier, than Greenwich (or whatever reference station is employed).

I shall presently return to the question how the longitude is to be determined with sufficient exactness for safety in sea voyages. But I may digress here to note what happens in sea voyages where the longitude changes. If a voyage is made towards the west, as from England to America, it is manifest that a watch set to Greenwich time, will be in advance of the local time as the ship proceeds westwards, and will be more and more in advance the farther the ship travels in that direction. For instance, suppose a watch shows Greenwich time; then when it is noon at Greenwich the watch will point to twelve, but it will be an hour before noon at a place fifteen degrees west of Greenwich, two hours before noon at a place thirty degrees west, and so on: that is, the watch will point to twelve when it is only eleven o'clock, ten o'clock, and so on, of local time. On arrival at New York, the traveller would find that his watch was nearly five hours fast. Of course the reverse happens in a voyage towards the east. For instance, a watch set to New York time would be found to be nearly five hours slow, for Greenwich time, when the traveller arrived in England.

In the following passage these effects are humorously illustrated by Mark Twain,—

"Young Mr. Blucher, who is from the Far West, and on his first voyage" (from New York to Europe) "was a good deal worried by the constantly changing 'ship-time.' He was proud of his new watch

* In this case, he is "at sea" (which, I trust, will not be the case with the reader), and, we may suppose, connected with Greenwich by submarine telegraph in course of being laid. In fact, the position of the *Great Eastern* throughout her cable-laying journeys, was determined by a method analogous to that sketched above.

at first, and used to drag it out promptly when eight bells struck at noon, but he came to look after a while as if he were losing confidence in it. Seven days out from New York he came on deck, and said with great decision, 'This thing's a swindle!' 'What's a swindle?' 'Why, this watch. I bought her out in Illinois—gave 150 dollars for her, and I thought she was good. And, by George, she is good on shore, but somehow she don't keep up her lick here on the water—gets sea-sick, may be. She skips; she runs along regular enough till half-past eleven, and then all of a sudden she lets down. I've set that old regulator up faster and faster, till I've shoved it clean round, but it don't do any good; she just distances every watch in the ship,* and clatters along in a way that's astonishing till it's noon, but them "eight bells" always gets in about ten minutes a head of her any way. I don't know what to do with her now. She's doing all she can,—she's going her best gait, but it won't save her. Now, don't you know there ain't a watch in the ship that's making better time than she is; but what does it signify? When you hear them "eight bells," you'll find her just ten minutes short of her score—sure.' The ship was gaining a full hour every three days, and this fellow was trying to make his watch go fast enough to keep up to her. But, as he had said, he had pushed the regulator up as far as it would go, and the watch was 'on its best gait,' and so nothing was left him but to fold his hands and see the ship beat the race. We sent him to the captain, and he explained to him the mystery of 'ship time' and set his troubled mind at rest. This young man," proceeds Mr. Clemens, *apropos des bottles*, "had asked a great many questions about sea-sickness before we left, and wanted to know what its characteristics were, and how he was to tell when he had it. He found out."

I cannot leave Mark Twain's narrative, however, without gently criticising a passage in which he has allowed his imagination to invent effects of longitude which assuredly were never perceived in any voyage since the ship *Argo* set out after the Golden Fleece. "We had the phenomenon of a full moon," he says, "located just in the same spot in the heavens, at the same hour every night. The reason of this singular conduct on the part of the moon did not occur to us at first, but it did afterwards, when we reflected that we were gaining about twenty minutes every day, because we were going east so fast, we gained just about enough every day to keep along with the moon. It was becoming an old moon to the friends we had left behind us, but to us Joshuas it stood still in the same place, and remained always the same." Oh Mr. Clemens, Mr. Clemens! In a work of imagination (as the "Innocents Abroad" must, I suppose,

* Because set to go "fast." Of course, the other watches on board would be left to go at their usual rate, and simply put forward at noon each day by so many minutes as corresponded to the run eastwards since the preceding noon.;

be to a great extent considered), a mistake such as that here made is perhaps not a very serious matter: but suppose some unfortunate compiler of astronomical works should happen to remember this passage, and to state (as a compiler would be tolerably sure to do, unless he had a mathematical friend at his elbow), that by voyaging eastwards at such and such a rate, a traveller can always have the moon "full" at night, in what an unpleasant predicament would the mistake have placed him. Such things happen, unfortunately; nay, I have even seen works, in which precisely such mistakes have been made, in use positively as textbooks for examinations. On this account, our fiction writers must be careful in introducing science details, lest peradventure science teachers (save the mark!) be led astray.

It need scarcely be said that no amount of eastwardly voyaging would cause the moon to remain always "full" as seen by the voyager. The moon's phase is the same from whatever part of the earth she may be seen, and she will become "new," that is, pass between the earth and the sun, no matter what voyages may be undertaken by the inhabitants of earth. Mr. Clemens has confounded the monthly motion of the moon with her daily motion. A traveller who could only go fast enough eastwards might keep the moon always due south. To do this he would have to travel completely round the earth in a day and (roughly) about 50½ minutes. If he continued this for a whole month, the moon would never leave the southern heavens; but she would not continue "full." In fact we see that the hour of the day (local time) would be continually changing,—since the traveller would not go round once in twenty-four hours (which would be following the sun, and would cause the hour of the day to remain always the same) but in twenty-four hours and the best part of another hour; so that the day would seem to pass on, though very slowly, lasting a lunar month instead of a common day.

Every one who makes a long sea-voyage must have noted the importance attached to noon observations; and many are misled into the supposition that these observations are directly intended for the determination of the longitude (or, which is the same thing, in effect, for determining true ship-time). This, however, is a mistake. The latitude can be determined at noon, as we have seen. A rough approximation to the local time can be obtained, also, and is commonly obtained, by noting when the sun begins to dip after reaching the highest part of his course above the horizon. But this is necessarily *only* a rough approximation, and quite unsuited for determining the ship's longitude. For the sun's elevation changes very slowly at noon, and no dip can be certainly recognized even from *terra firma*, far less from a ship, within a few minutes of true noon. A determination of time effected in this way, serves very well for the

ship's "watches," and accordingly when the sun, so observed, begins to dip, they strike 'eight bells' and "make it noon." But it would be a serious matter for the crew if that was made the noon for working the ship's place; for an error of many miles would be inevitable.

The following passage from "Foul Play," illustrates the way in which mistakes have arisen on this point. The hero, who being a clergyman and a university man is of course a master of every branch of science, is about to distinguish himself before the heroine by working out the position of the ship *Proserpine*, whose captain is senselessly drunk. After ten days' murky weather "the sky suddenly cleared, and a rare opportunity occurred to take an observation. Hazel suggested to Wylie, the mate, the propriety of taking advantage of the moment, as the fog bank out of which they had just emerged would soon envelop them again, and they had not more than an hour or so of such observation available. The man gave a shuffling answer. So Hazel sought the captain in his cabin. He found him in bed. He was dead drunk. On a shelf lay the instruments. These Hazel took and then looked round for the chronometers. They were safely locked in their cases. He carried the instruments on deck, together with a book of tables, and quietly began to make preparations, at which Wylie, arresting his walk, gazed with utter astonishment" (as well he might).

"'Now, Mr. Wylie, I want the key of the chronometer cases.'

"'Here is a chronometer, Mr. Hazel,' said Helen, very innocently, 'if that is all you want.'

"Hazel smiled, and explained that a ship's clock is made to keep the most exact time; that he did not require the time of the spot where they were, but Greenwich time. He took the watch, however. It was a large one for a lady to carry; but it was one of Frodsham's masterpieces.

"'Why, Miss Rolleston,' said he, 'this watch must be two hours slow. It marks ten o'clock; it is now nearly midday. Ah, I see,' he added with a smile, 'you have wound it regularly every day, but you have forgotten to set it daily. Indeed, you may be right; it would be a useless trouble, since we change our longitude hourly. Well, let us suppose that this watch shows the exact time at Sydney, as I presume it does, I can work the ship's reckoning from that meridian, instead of that of Greenwich.' And he set about doing it." Wylie, after some angry words with Hazel, brings the chronometers and the charts. Hazel "verified Miss Rolleston's chronometer, and allowing for difference of time, found it to be accurate. He returned it to her, and proceeded to work on the chart. The men looked on: so did Wylie. After a few moments, Hazel read as follows:—West longitude 146° 53' 18". South latitude 35° 24'. The island of

Oparo* and the Four Crowns distant 420 miles on the N.N.E.," and so on. And, of course, "Miss Rolleston fixed her large soft eyes on the young clergyman with the undisguised admiration a woman is apt to feel for what she does not understand."

The scene here described corresponds pretty closely, I have little doubt, with one actually witnessed by the novelist, except only that the captain or chief officer made the observations, and that either there had not been ten days' murky weather or else that in the forenoon, several hours at least before noon, an observation of the sun had been made. The noon observation would give the latitude, and combined with a forenoon observation, would give the longitude; but *alone* would be practically useless for that purpose. It is curious that the novelist sets the longitude as assigned much more closely than the latitude, and the value given would imply that the ship's time was known within less than a second. This would in any case be impracticable; but from noon observations the time could not be learned within a minute at the least. The real fact is, that to determine true time, the seaman selects, not noon, as is commonly supposed, but a time when the sun is nearly due east, or due west. For then the sun's elevation changes most rapidly, and so gives the surest means of determining the time. The reader can easily see the *rationale* of this, by considering the case of an ordinary clock-hand. Suppose our only means of telling the time was by noting how high the end of the minute hand was: then clearly we should be apt to make a greater mistake in estimating the time when the hand was near XII., than at any other time, because then its end changes very slowly in height, and a minute more or less makes very little difference. On the contrary, when the hand was near III. and IX., we could in a very few seconds note any change of the height of its extremity. In one case we could not tell the time within a minute or two; in the other, we could tell it within a few seconds.

But the noon observation would be wanted to complete the determination of the longitude; for until the latitude was known, the captain would not be aware what apparent path the sun was describing in the heavens, and, therefore, would not know the time corresponding to any particular solar observation. So that a passenger, curious in watching the captain's work, would be apt to infer that the noon observations gave the longitude, since he would perceive that from them the captain worked out both the longitude and the latitude.

It is curious that another and critical portion of the same entertaining novel, is affected by the mistake of the novelist on this subject. After the scuttling of the *Proserpine*, and other events,

* The island fixes the longitude at about 147°, otherwise I should have thought the 4 was a misprint for 7. In longitude 177° west, Sydney time would be about 2 hours slow, but about 4 hours slow in longitude 147° west.

Hazel and Miss Rolleston are alone on an island in the Pacific. Hazel seeks to determine their position, as one step towards escape. Now "you must know that Hazel, as he lay on his back in the boat, had often in a half-drowsy way, watched the effect of the sun upon the boat's mast: it now stood, a bare pole, and at certain hours acted like the needle of a dial, by casting a shadow on the sands. Above all, he could see pretty well, by means of this pole and its shadow, when the sun attained its greatest elevation. He now asked Miss Rolleston to assist him in making this observation exactly. She obeyed his instructions, and the moment the shadow reached its highest angle and showed the minutest symptom of declension, she said 'Now,' and Hazel called out in a loud voice" (why did he do that?) "'Noon!' 'And forty-nine minutes past eight at Sydney,' said Helen, holding out her chronometer; for she had been sharp enough to get it ready of her own accord. Hazel looked at her and at the watch with amazement and incredulity. 'What?' said he, 'Impossible. You can't have kept Sydney time all this while.' 'And pray why not?' said Helen. 'Have you forgotten that some one praised me for keeping Sydney time? it helped you, somehow or other, to know where we were.'" After some discussion in which she shows how natural it was that she should have wound up her watch every night, even when "neither of them expected to see the morning," she asks to be praised. "'Praised!' cried Hazel, excitedly, 'worshipped, you mean. Why, we have got the longitude by means of your chronometer. It is wonderful! It is providential. It is the finger of Heaven. Pen and ink, and let me work it out.'" He was "soon busy calculating the longitude of Godsend Island." What follows is even more curiously erroneous. "'There,' said he. 'Now the latitude I must guess at by certain combinations. In the first place the slight variation in the length of the days. Then I must try and make a rough calculation of the sun's parallax.'" (It would have been equally to the purpose to have calculated how many cows' tails would reach to the moon.) "'And then my botany will help me a little; spices furnish a clue; there are one or two that will not grow outside the tropic," and so on. He finally sets the latitude between the 26th and 33rd parallels, a range of nearly 500 miles. The longitude, however, which is much more closely assigned, is wrong altogether, being set at $103\frac{1}{2}$ degrees *west*, as the rest of the story requires. For Godsend Island is within not many days' sail of Valparaiso. The mistake has probably arisen from setting Sydney in *west* longitude instead of *east* longitude, $151^{\circ} 14'$; for the difference of time, 3h, 11m., corresponds within a minute to the difference of longitude between $151^{\circ} 14'$ west and $103\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ west.

More mistakes of calculation, however, matter little in such cases. They do not affect the interest of a story even in such extreme cases as in "Ivanhoe," where a full century is dropped in such sort that one

of Richard the First's knights holds converse with a contemporary of the Conqueror, who, if my memory deceives me not, was Cœur de Lion's great-great-grandfather. It is a pity, however, that a novelist or indeed any writer should attempt to sketch scientific *methods* with which he is not familiar. No discredit can attach to any person, not an astronomer, who does not understand the astronomical processes for determining latitude and longitude, any more than to one who, not being a lawyer, is unfamiliar with the rules of Conveyancing. But when an attempt is made by a writer of fiction to give an exact description of any technical matter, it is as well to secure correctness by submitting the description to some friend acquainted with the principles of the subject. For, singularly enough, people pay much more attention to these descriptions when met with in novels than when given in textbooks of science, and they thus come to remember thoroughly well precisely what they ought to forget. I think, for instance, that it may not improbably have been some recollection of "Foul Play" which led Mr. Lockyer to make the surprising statement that longitude is determined at sea by comparing chronometer time with local time, which is found "at noon by observing, with the aid of a sextant, when the sun is at the highest point of its path." Our novelists really must not lead the student of astronomy astray in this manner.

It will be clear to the reader, by this time, that the great point in determining the longitude, is to have the true time of Greenwich or some other reference station, in order that by comparing this time with ship time, the longitude east or west of the reference station may be ascertained. Ship time can always be determined by a morning or afternoon observation of the sun, or by observing a known star when towards the east or west, at which time the diurnal motion raises or depresses it most rapidly. The latitude being known, the time of day (any given day) at which the sun or a star should have any particular altitude is known also, and, therefore, conversely, when the altitude of the sun or a star has been noted, the seaman has learned the time of day. But to find Greenwich time is another matter; and without Greenwich time, ship time teaches nothing as to the longitude. How is the voyager at sea or in desert places to know the exact time at Greenwich or some other fixed station? We have seen that chronometers are used for this purpose; and chronometers are now made so marvellously perfect in construction that they can be trusted to show true time within a few seconds, under ordinary conditions. But it must not be overlooked that in long voyages a chronometer, however perfect its construction, is more liable to get wrong than at a fixed station. That it is continually tossed and shaken is something; but is not the chief trial to which it is exposed. The great changes of temperature endured when a ship passes from the temperate latitudes across the torrid zone to the temperate zone

again, try a chronometer far more severely than any ordinary form of motion. And then it is to be noted that a very insignificant time-error corresponds to a difference of longitude quite sufficient to occasion a serious error in the ship's estimated position. For this reason and for others, it is desirable to have some means of determining Greenwich time independently of chronometers.

This, in fact, is the famous problem for the solution of which such high rewards were offered and have been given.* It was to solve this problem that Whiston, the same who fondly imagined Newton was afraid of him,† suggested the use of bombs and mortars; for which Hogarth pilloried him in the celebrated madhouse scene of the *Rake's Progress*. Of course Whiston had perceived the essential feature of all methods intended for determining the longitude. Any signal which is *recognisable*, no matter by eye or ear, or in whatsoever way, at both stations, the reference station and the station whose longitude is required, must necessarily suffice to convey the time of one station to the other. The absurdity of Whiston's scheme lay in the implied supposition that any form of ordnance could propel rocket signals far enough to be seen or heard in mid-ocean. Manifestly the only signals available, when telegraphic communication is impossible, are signals in the celestial spaces; for these alone can be discerned simultaneously from widely distant parts of the earth. It has been to such signals, then, that men of science have turned for the required means of determining longitude.

Galileo was the first to point out that the satellites of Jupiter supply a series of signals which might serve to determine the longitude. When one of these bodies is eclipsed in Jupiter's shadow, or passes out of sight behind Jupiter's disc, or reappears from eclipse or occultation, the phenomenon is one which can be seen from a whole hemisphere of the earth's surface. It is as truly a signal as the appearance or disappearance of a light in ordinary night-signalling. If it can be calculated beforehand that one of these events will take place at any given hour of Greenwich time, then, from whatever spot the phenomenon is observed, it is known there that the Greenwich hour is that indicated. Theoretically this is a solution of the famous

* For the invention of the chronometer Harrison (a Yorkshire carpenter and the son of a carpenter) received twenty thousand pounds. This sum had been offered for a marine chronometer which would stand the test of two voyages of assigned length. Harrison laboured fifty years before he succeeded in meeting the required conditions.

† Newton, for excellent reasons, had opposed Whiston's election to the Royal Society. Like most small men Whiston was eager to secure a distinction which, unless spontaneously offered to him, could have conferred no real honour. Accordingly he was amusingly indignant with Newton for opposing him. "Newton perceived," he wrote, "that I could not do as his other darling friends did, that is, learn of him without contradicting him when I differed in opinion from him: he could not in his old age bear such contradiction, and so he was afraid of me the last thirteen years of his life."

problem; and Galileo, the discoverer of Jupiter's four satellites, thought he had found the means of determining the longitude with great accuracy. Unfortunately these hopes have not been realised. At sea, indeed, except in the calmest weather, it is impossible to observe the phenomena of Jupiter's satellites, simply because the telescope cannot be directed steadily upon the planet. But even on land Jupiter's satellites afford but imperfect means of guessing at the longitude. For, at present, their motions have not been thoroughly mastered by astronomers, and though the Nautical Almanac gives the estimated epochs for the various phenomena of the four satellites, yet, owing to the imperfection of the tables, these epochs are often found to be appreciably in error. There is yet another difficulty. The satellites are not mere points, but being in reality also as large as or larger than our moon, they have discs of appreciable though small dimensions. Accordingly they do not vanish or reappear instantaneously, but gradually, the process lasting in reality several seconds (a longer or shorter time, according to the particular satellites considered), and the estimated moment of the phenomenon thus comes to depend on the power of the telescope employed, or the skill or the visual powers of the observer, or the condition of the atmosphere, and so on. Accordingly, very little reliance could be placed on such observations as a mean for determining the longitude with any considerable degree of exactness.

No other celestial phenomena present themselves except those depending on the moon's motions.* All the planets, as well as the

* If but one star or a few would periodically (and quite regularly) "go out" for a few moments, the intervals between such vanishings being long enough to ensure that one would not be mistaken in point of time for the next or following one, then it would be possible to determine Greenwich or other reference time with great exactness. And here one cannot but recognize an argument against the singular theory that the stars were intended simply as lights to adorn our heavens and to be of use to mankind. The teleologists who have adopted this strange view, can hardly show how the theory is consistent with the fact that quite readily the stars (or a few of them) might have been so contrived as to give man the means of travelling with much more security over the length and breadth of his domain than is at present possible. In this connection I venture to quote a passage in which Sir John Herschel has touched on the *usefulness* of the stars, in terms which were they not corrected by other and better known passages in his writings, might suggest that he had adopted the theory I have just mentioned:—"The stars," he said, in an address to the Astronomical Society, in 1827, "are landmarks of the universe; and amidst the endless and complicated fluctuations of our system, seem placed by its Creator as guides and records, not merely to elevate our minds by the contemplation of what is vast, but to teach us to direct our actions by reference to what is immutable in His works. It is indeed hardly possible to over-appreciate their value in this point of view. Every well-determined star, from the moment its place is registered, becomes to the astronomer, the geographer, the navigator, the surveyor, a point of departure which can never deceive or fail him,—the same for ever and in all places, of a delicacy so extreme as to be a test for every instrument yet invented by man, yet

sun and moon, traverse at various rates and in different paths the sphere of the fixed stars. But the moon alone moves with sufficient rapidity to act as a time-indicator for terrestrial voyagers. It is hardly necessary to explain why rapidity of motion is important; but the following illustration may be given for the purpose. The hour hand of a clock does in reality indicate the minute as well as the hour; yet owing to the slowness of its motion we regard the hour-hand as an unsatisfactory time-indicator, and only consider it as showing what hour is in progress. So with the more slowly-moving celestial bodies. They would serve well enough, at least some among them would, to show the *day of the year*, if we could only imagine that such information were ever required from celestial bodies. But it would be hopeless to attempt to ascertain the true time with any degree of accuracy from their motions. Now the moon really moves with considerable rapidity among the stars.* She completes the circuit of the celestial sphere in $27\frac{1}{3}$ days (a period less than the common lunation), so that in one day she traverses about thirteen degrees,—or her own diameter (which is rather more than half a degree) in about an hour. This, astronomically speaking, is very rapid motion; and as it can be detected in a few seconds by telescopic comparison of the moon's place with that of some fixed star, it serves to show the time within a few seconds, which is precisely what is required by the seaman. Theoretically, all he has to do, is to take the moon's apparent distance from a known star, and also her height and the star's height above the horizon. Thence he can calculate

equally adapted for the most ordinary purposes; as available for regulating a town-clock as for conducting a navy to the Indies; as effective for mapping down the intricacies of a petty barony, as for adjusting the boundaries of transatlantic empires. When once its place has been thoroughly ascertained, and carefully recorded, the brazen circle with which the useful work was done may moulder, the marble pillar may totter on its base, and the astronomer himself survive only in the gratitude of posterity; but the record remains, and transfuses all its own exactness into every determination which takes it for a groundwork, giving to inferior instruments, nay, even to temporary contrivances, and to the observations of a few weeks or days, all the precision attained originally at the cost of so much time, labour, and expense." It is only necessary as a corrective to the erroneous ideas which might otherwise be suggested by this somewhat high-flown passage, to quote the following remarks from the work which represented Sir John Herschel's more matured views, his well-known "Outlines of Astronomy." "For what purpose are we to suppose such magnificent bodies scattered through the abyss of space? Surely not to illuminate our nights, which an additional moon of the thousandth part of the size of our own world would do much better; nor to sparkle as a pageant void of meaning and reality, and bewilder us among vain conjectures. Useful, it is true, they are to man as points of exact and permanent reference, but he must have studied astronomy to little purpose, who can suppose man to be the only object of his Creator's care; or, who does not see in the vast and wonderful apparatus around us, provision for other races of animated beings."

* It was this doubtless which led to the distinction recognised in the book of Job, where the moon is described as "walking in brightness."

what would be the moon's distance from the star at the moment of observation, if the observer were at the earth's centre. But the Nautical Almanac informs him of the precise instant of Greenwich time corresponding to this calculated distance. So he has, what he requires, the true Greenwich time.

It will be manifest that all methods of finding the way at sea, except the rough processes depending on the log and compass, require that the celestial bodies, or some of them, should be seen. Hence it is that cloudy weather for any considerable length of time, occasions danger and sometimes leads to shipwreck and loss of life. Of course the captain of a ship proceeds with extreme caution when the weather has long been cloudy, especially if according to his reckoning he is drawing near shore. Then the lead comes into play, that by soundings, if possible, the approach to shore may be indicated. Then also by day and night a careful watch is kept for the signs of land. But it sometimes happens that despite all such precautions a ship is lost; for there are conditions of weather which, occurring when a ship is nearing shore, render the most careful look-out futile. These conditions may be regarded as included among ordinary sea-risks, by which term are understood all such dangers as would leave a captain blameless if shipwreck occurred. It would be well if no ships were ever lost save from ordinary sea-risks; but unfortunately ships are sometimes cast ashore for want of care; either in maintaining due watch as the shore is approached, or taking advantage of opportunities, which may be few and far between, for observing sun, or moon, or stars, as the voyage proceeds. It may safely be said that the greater number of avoidable shipwrecks have been occasioned by the neglect of due care in finding the way at sea.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

MUSIC IN ENGLAND.

"POLYBIUS, the judicious Polybius, tells us that music was necessary to soften the manners of the Arcadians who dwelt in a country where the atmosphere is bitter and cold; that the inhabitants of Cynœthæ, who neglected the study of music, surpassed all Greeks in cruelty, and that that city was the scene of the most terrible crimes. Plato does not hesitate to say that a change in music betokens a change in the constitution of the state, and Aristotle, although he seems to have written his work on Politics with the express intention of opposing the opinions of Plato, agrees with him on this subject. Theophrastus, Plutarch, Strabo, all the ancients thought the same." (Montesquieu, 'Esprit des Lois,' Book IV. ch. VIII.)

The writer then proceeds to explain what he is pleased to call a paradox of the ancients, and observes that the Greeks, being a "society" of "Athletes and Warriors" required something to ameliorate their manners, and that for this music was admirably suited. It is, however, necessary to remember the difference between the cultivation of music and a musical education. By the latter Plato meant the general education of the mind, and as such it was contrasted with the gymnasium, viz., the training of the body, so that the so-called paradox is intelligible simply by reference to the works of that philosopher. Montesquieu apparently regarded the question in this light only, and ignored the fact that Aristotle recommends the cultivation of music to the young and such as could not have joined in the manly exercises of the theatre.

We may therefore assume that music was considered by these philosophers as a powerful agent to counteract the effect of grosser pursuits, and as such, beneficial not only to gladiators and warriors, but to all classes of the community. If however, music was sufficiently elevated in those comparatively early days to raise the soul of man above the material universe, what can it not effect now? Unlike the other arts music seems to have developed late, nor probably has it yet attained the highest point of its capacity, for new schools of thought and design are at work to-day, new appliances of known combinations are discovered, and melody appears to be inexhaustible. Besides the elements that music possesses in common with all arts, it is revealed to the world in a manner so peculiarly its own, and the medium of sound, apart from what it represents, is capable of exercising so powerful an influence, that it is at least probable that the manifestations of this art appeal immediately to

the sympathies of the people. Let us for the present concentrate our attention on our own time and our own nation, and observe how music is now regarded and how the people accept its influence.

That the English are musically inclined is proved by the musical history of the nation, which seems to have surpassed all others both in precocity and development up to the time of Purcell and the commencement of the 18th century, when, although we had Handel working in the midst of us, the influence of the house of Hanover and the influx of foreigners, foreign habits and languages, caused a sad depression in musical taste. But from this we are rapidly rising; witness the numerous societies which have grown up of late years in the metropolis and the provinces.

Although upwards of 60 years old, the Philharmonic Society has undergone such important changes within the last 20 or 30 years that a few remarks concerning its progress will be in point. It was established in 1813, Salomon the violinist being one of the founders who had formerly engaged Haydn to write his twelve grand symphonies. J. B. Cramer was another, who stood for long at the very summit of his profession in the threefold capacity of composer, pianist, and publisher; every one knows his *Piano-forte Studies*, or should know them, that would excel on the instrument, and the time is not remote when this 'glorious John' among musicians was the centre of European esteem. One other was Charles Neate, the only survivor of the original knot whose merit is not forgotten and whose mediation between the Society and Beethoven is of lasting consequence. The object of this institution is to uphold that class of music which, because it stands above and apart from all others, is distinguished as classical, and while the principles of this society are strictly conservative, it has been the means, through commissioning artists to write for its concerts, of bringing some of the greatest masterpieces into music. It originally resembled a club, and was supported by numerous subscribers whose names would stand for years upon the list of nominees before there was room for their admission. Its first concerts were given in the old Argyll Rooms, which were destroyed by fire in 1829. There, during one of the society's performances, Spohr was interrupted in playing one of his violin concertos by the smashing of the windows because the house was not, like every other, illuminated in honour of Queen Caroline's acquittal. The concert-room of the King's Theatre in the Haymarket was next chosen, and subsequently the Hanover Square Rooms became the home of the society. It was very prosperous for a long period, laying by considerable sums of money, but from various causes, its funds were frequently drawn upon after its removal to Hanover Square. The subscribers' list had shrunk, the days of exclusion were no more, those of open doors at moderate prices had arrived, but the limited space forbade the

admission of sufficient numbers to meet at lower rates the necessities of the occasion. At last an energetic member of the committee proposed that as there was no chance of recovery in that situation, the Philharmonic should move to St. James's Hall. This was done, and since that time the society has prospered to such an extent that the funds have grown instead of dwindled, and far from relying almost entirely on subscribers, a very large sum is generally paid by the public for admission to single concerts. I may mention in passing as a sign of the increasing capacity of the audience, that the slow movement in the Pastoral Symphony of Beethoven is now given in its entirety, whereas in the good old days extensive cuts were made to bring it within their comprehension.

The Crystal Palace Concerts bear a strong family likeness to the Philharmonic. After the manner of the age the younger generation—among institutions as much as in humanity—aims to outshine its elders. In them we see the great advantage of having a permanent paid band, who, by practising together whenever their conductor wishes it, obtain a proficiency which cannot be looked for in societies which meet only once a fortnight for two months in the year, and seldom rehearse a work more than once or twice before performance. Here is an influence that works upon thousands; the frequency of the concerts enfranchises the directors from the restriction that limits other establishments in the choice of works. Forgotten mines of art are explored and their treasures newly revealed; living artists too find here a fair field for their productions. Symphonies of Haydn, that have been scarcely known but to the student, symphonies of Mozart to which there has been little access, are here made familiar to daily audiences, side by side with the productions of latest times. What an education for the listeners! What an encouragement for the producers! Much good work must be done by the admirable analytical programmes which are prepared for these concerts by Mr. Grove, and for the Philharmonic by Mr. Macfarren.

The British Orchestral Society was instituted last winter by a few amateurs to show what British players could do. It showed that they could do much, for best judges are agreed that for tone, power, delicacy, and manipulation the string instrument players who performed at their concerts were unsurpassed. This society will meet again next winter, and its concerts will have a manifold effect upon the public mind; it is to be hoped that it will lay the ghost of popular superstition, that if not grafted with aliens the denizens of this soil are incapable of good fruit.

At the Albert Hall, orchestral concerts are given every day, which shows how great a demand there is for a supply of musical performances.

Even this was not enough to meet the growing appetite for instrumental performances on a large scale. Only the other day another

Crystal Palace was opened at the Alexandra Park, and here too are to be public concerts six times a week, at which the public may be as much edified as delighted.

The Monday Popular Concerts originated at the time of the Cattle Show in 1857, when huge clap-trap concerts were given every evening. An accident caused the substitution of chamber music and weekly performances through the winter season, and it is impossible to overrate the great influence this movement has had, the concerts being crowded to excess by an audience whose attention is evinced by the remarkable silence which reigns during the music. It is said, but not quite truly, that folks frequent these concerts for the love of fashion more than for the love of art. Grant this for argument's sake, it would still not be the only case in which "they who came to scoff remained to pray." It is impossible that the hundreds who crowd the concerts, sitting patient for an hour before the beginning, in order to secure that they may sit and not have to stand the night long, beguiling the minutes over their knitting (if they be feminine,) or over their newspaper (if of the masculine gender)—it is impossible that they can quit a two hours' performance by great executants of the great works of great masters, and be unimpressed.

The Musical Union, where similar music is given, is more select and clubbish, and can hardly be said to have much public interest; though to subscribers and those who can afford to pay half a guinea for two hours' enjoyment on a summer's afternoon, it is no doubt a great pleasure.

Choral societies must have the next, if they should not have had the first, consideration. These are doubly important, as including the active and the passive elements among their numbers, who are both performers and listeners, and as disseminating a critical appreciation in addition to a practical knowledge of music. Chief among them in long and firm standing is the Sacred Harmonic. Here Londoners have learned the magnitude in extent and grandeur, of an entire Oratorio—a class of musical composition which many, not without reason, esteem the highest. Before its institution the "Messiah" and "Creation" were rarely to be heard complete, and other works of the kind were known only in fragments. An oratorio is now as familiar a form of art as a cathedral. Mendelssohn's and Spohr's masterpieces have been presented under the direction of the authors, and many of Handel's greatest works have grown familiar. Is not this an influence that must operate powerfully upon popular intelligence? A direct offshoot of the Sacred Harmonic Society, proposed and organized by its Committee, is the Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace. Whether a success musically or not, this deserves attention. An experimental festival took place in 1857, preparatory to a grand celebration of the centenary in 1859 of Handel's death. In George the Third's time a birthday was considered a more appro-

prate event to honour with festivities, and *à propos* of the 24th of February, 1784, there was by mistake a commemoration in Westminster Abbey of Handel's birth, he having been really born on the 23rd of February 1685. Handel himself must have regarded death as a solemn if not gloomy occurrence, if the Dead March in Saul represents his ideas on the subject, but with singular incongruity, for the sake of a festival in some shape, his death was made the subject of festal joy in 1859, and since then the festivals have taken place triennially. Considering the immense space that is filled on these occasions, and that 25,000 people have been accommodated irrespective of the choir, which to a great extent consists of volunteers, we may fairly take this as an example of the increasing popularity of music. There has never been but one man whose works would bear performance on so vast a scale, and there has never been but this one whose music could be at once heard by so countless an audience as assembles there. It would be wanton to pretend that a country in which such a performance can be given and such an audience collected is not capable of the highest musical attainments.

Barnby's Choir was established in 1867, at first for the performance of madrigals and part-songs, which were artistically successful. Afterwards having obtained a triumph in the St. Matthew Passion of Bach, which had been a failure previously, the society acquired a reputation which it has well sustained. This reputation induced the Albert Hall directors to invite the choir to amalgamate with a society they had attempted to institute and to give its performances in the colossal arena over which they preside. The attraction to the public has been even greater here than at Exeter and St. James's Halls. It is worth noticing that one of Handel's least-known works has been revived and others are promised, the grand experiment being for the most part due to the personal guarantee of an amateur.

Lealie's Choir, which has been established about thirty years, excellently trained as it is, and appealing by the performance of a considerable proportion of old English music to the alas! long dormant sympathies and associations of the people, enjoys a great reputation, and from one point of view may, in common with all revivals of the sort, be regarded as the link which by awakening a forgotten chord reminds us of the past, and kindles in us a desire for higher perfection in the present.

The Opera next demands our attention. It is very curious how events repeat themselves. Handel, who was previously at the King's opera, set up an opposition in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and the favourite singers followed his example in this century, and, with Costa to keep them together, opened Covent Garden as the rival of Her Majesty's opera. The Italian opera is in truth now a fiction; the greater part of the works that are performed at the two establishments are not of Italian production, neither are the greater

part of the singers natives of the sunny clime. Little of Italian but the language is proffered to the public, and that for the most part is questionable. This expensive luxury is much patronised, but opinions vary as to its influence. Without doubt the visitors are attracted by famous names and not by compositions, they find it less trouble to admire one highly paid vocalist than to attend to a complete cast efficiently filled, and they go as much to meet one another and to say they have been, as to gain edification or even amusement from the performance.

English opera is much more ancient, having been established in 1656, before the German, though subsequently to the French opera. The Puritan Cromwell, perhaps inconsistently with his principles, licensed to Sir William Davenant, Rutland House, Aldersgate, where Mrs. Henry Colman, the first female public singer, played Ianthé in an opera entitled the "Siege of Rhodes." It is not a little remarkable that we owe so much to Puritan times.

Dr. Arnold (the musician) obtained a licence from George III. to establish a training school for singers; hence the name Lyceum. At this period if a play contained three pieces of music it was called an opera, and this class of composition was performed under that title for thirty years when Weber's "Der Freischütz" was given. About 1830 the Lyceum met with the common fate of opera houses, and was burnt down. Being rebuilt in 1834, a work of Edward Loder's, and Barnett's "Mountain Sylph" were performed, but the institution passed through many vicissitudes until Harrison produced an opera of Balfe's in 1857. Affairs then prospered so far that English opera migrated to Drury Lane and subsequently to Covent Garden; but Mr. Harrison attributed his later ill success to the closing of all theatres for three days after the Prince Consort's death, a cessation of affairs from which the English opera never rallied; its downfall was however more probably precipitated by the rise and increasing popularity of music halls. It may be mentioned that English operas have been produced for some years at the Crystal Palace, where, although but inferior singers are engaged, a very great success has been secured. A limited liability company also occupied Covent Garden for two years from 1864, when, Macfarren's "Helvellyn" was produced.

Leaving London we travel north and are struck with the wonderful success of Mr. Charles Hallé. That gentleman came to this country for shelter in 1848, the year of revolutions, and settled in Manchester. From that moment dates the regeneration of the north, for he has an excellent band under his entire control, practising much together, and visiting many of the important northern towns.

Then there is the Liverpool Philharmonic, the Birmingham Festival, the Norwich and the three choir festivals; all important undertak-

ings in the country, and all increasing in popularity and success. All praise is due to the energetic members of the Church of England who have established choirs and kept alive in the cathedrals and elsewhere the love for our wonderful and in its way unsurpassed school of church music, which is being continually added to by many accomplished writers who still preserve the ancient traditions. Who would have gone to hear a special musical service at the Abbey twenty years ago? Now, when the "Passion" by Bach is given there, at St. Paul's, at Christ Church, Oxford, or at St. Anne's, Soho, the public throng to listen to that wondrous music whose influence is the more keenly felt in the midst of surrounding associations.

Nor is it only in towns that advances are made. The peasants and country people have the will if only the way is pointed out. A few months since I happened to be travelling through Derbyshire and passed a few days at a village in the south of that county. After dinner, on learning that the resource of a billiard table was denied me, I asked for general information as to the amusements of the village. I was told that a concert was to be given that night in the parish school-room, and naturally concluded that an ordinary part-song or two, a jovial ditty from the proverbial blacksmith, and a few songs from distinguished amateurs in the neighbourhood, would make up the programme. I was, however, agreeably surprised and much impressed on arriving at the room to hear the opening phrase of the overture to Handel's "Alexander's Feast," which was capitally performed with a choir of about thirty members, a small string band, and excellent solo singers, under the management of an amateur residing in the village, who wielded the bâton with energy and precision. Having to spend Sunday at the same spot I went to the church, in itself a most interesting place, where the music was very well sung, and accompanied by the organist on an instrument above the average, with two manuals and about twenty-three stops. This was also under the direction of the above-mentioned amateur, who is evidently doing a very excellent work in that remote corner of the world.

I have mentioned only the most important musical undertakings of later times, for to name all the societies, private and public, that have sprung up in London and the country during the last twenty years would be prolix and wearisome. It is enough to show generally that the supply has not exceeded the demand, judging from the numbers who avail themselves of these advantages. Now supposing only a small minority of these really appreciate the best music, there must be a vast and increasing public who genuinely love the highest forms of the art (although, perhaps, but few enter deeply into its study), and these have multiplied so rapidly that it cannot be only in proportion to the increasing population.

There are three ways of hearing music :—

1. By the senses.
2. With the understanding.
3. Through the imagination.

The second requires a grammarian who should be the musical critic, but the first is given to all with however slight a musical affinity, though their capacity of appreciation differs in degree. Still many could acquire a considerable insight into the grammarian's province if only they would yield to instruction. The third requires a poetic temperament, and attaches to an art at an advanced period of its progress, when the tendency of the expression is to become subjective instead of objective. It is impossible to disregard this phase in musical development, when so many profess to have experienced it, although the art critic who argues by analogy from all art, regards it sceptically, and rather as a sign of decline than of progress.

The greatest amount of enjoyment is experienced by the man who unites the two first methods ; but the majority are influenced for good or evil solely through the emotional parts of their nature.

It is improbable that there was much room for musical criticism among the Greeks whilst their different modes were calculated to raise in the minds of the auditors various sentiments of anger, joy, and the like, and this is the only effect music can have upon the general public now-a-days, as they have little time to study the grammar or to exercise the imagination. When, therefore, different forms of expression excite, pacify, or depress, caterers for the multitude should exercise great discrimination in the selection of music, and provide that which is likely to appeal to the best parts of human nature. The market, however, is flooded with compositions of the baser sort, and there is reason to fear that the majority of the people are thus led from the true path by these panderers to a taste that could be moulded to something higher, were teachers and writers equally devoted to their art, as the English people have shown themselves in their musical history to have the capacity for thorough love and appreciation.

Now-a-days there is so much talk and difference of opinion about what is called "music of the future," that one is compelled to doubt whether there will be such a thing in the sense of a permanent growth of the trunk itself, irrespective of flowery branches and fungoid excrescences. There exists a mania for the formation of cliques, whose members are devoted to one composer, and him they place on a pinnacle. Some rave about Schubert, others about Handel, Schumann, or Wagner. We here see the excesses into which many people are led by private judgment. Those who can grasp nothing later than Handel, instead of honouring him as he deserves, and listening to the voice of authority which pronounces him a great artist, and for his time as great as could be, but declares

that his successors have still further developed music, and that comparisons cannot be made between Handel and Beethoven, they exclude everything else from their library and their minds save Handel's music; thus by their obstinacy actually doing an injury to the great master.

Similarly when others declare that the operas of Wagner or the symphonic poems of Liszt represent the art of the future, they damage their own cause, since they tempt critics to judge of such music as music, when it is in fact a thing apart. It is very difficult indeed at present to ascertain without doubt whether the works of Schumann, and later, of Brahms are true developments of music. These composers both incline, Schumann more particularly, to the romantic school; they differ from the latest recognised developments not so much in composition as in sentiment, and in the expression of melodic ideas by new forms of rhythm and more striking surroundings. The folly of those who class the last mentioned masters with Liszt and Wagner can only be explained on the score of ignorance. Brahms is a rigid adherent to the accepted and beautiful rules of the musical art, and far from esteeming them as ignoble fetters and rococo fads, he is at once their dutiful son and powerful master. In no country are famous individuals run after to a greater extent than in England, and it is to be feared that among the select thousands who study and appreciate classical music there are many whose judgments are perverted] by this indiscriminate adhesion to a particular hero, whilst there are even some professors who foster the spirit of exclusiveness.

With regard to the masses it is clear that they possess historically a great natural aptitude for music. As the townspeople are the first to become corrupt, so they sooner feel the effect of a beneficial revolution, whilst although the peasantry preserve traditions longer they must in time be influenced by change. This leads me to think, that except where choirs have been formed, and good church music cultivated, the revival of this century does not extend very far into the rural districts. The peasantry (if such a class exists) were no doubt exempt for a long period from the degenerating influences of the last century, but it will take some time and patience to raise their musical taste in this.

Perhaps our modern habits of life render us hardly so amenable to the influences of art as the Arcadians probably were, yet our opportunities and advantages must be much greater. Theoretically we cannot imagine any Greek people, however primitive, cultivating an art without carrying it to a certain amount of perfection, so that by analogy with painting and poetry, music should have been highly developed amongst the Greeks. Practically however the evidence goes to show that this was not the fact. The Arcadians more likely encouraged musical culture from motives of policy, an example

modern legislators might possibly do well to follow. With us music was developed through many centuries solely through the love and talents of the people for it, and, although a period of stagnation has intervened, we may look with confidence on the present revival and the future development of our musical taste.

Some have objected that music excites evil passions and should therefore be proscribed. Now every form of rhythmical expression can be made the means of expressing pure artistic thought, and can also be abused and vulgarised. It is thus, and through its association with the indecent and sensual dances of the burlesque, the rough, ungainly, and exciting romping of a modern ball-room, and the vulgar, coarse songs of the Music Hall, that music has come to be regarded as an enemy to morality. Separate it from these vile companions and degenerate scribblers, and it becomes an ennobling art. Others again have urged that music exercises an effeminating influence. True it is that mighty nations have degenerated and become demoralised and effeminate, but in none of them was music cultivated to any great extent. The Germans are generally accredited with having studied music more persistently and deeply than any other people ancient or modern, and far from becoming enervated, they have lately given unmistakeable proofs of increasing vigour. If the cultivation of this art has the effect attributed to it, it is clear that those who devote their lives to its culture would be especially affected; but whoever has read and considered the lives and works of the great masters of the last hundred and fifty years must be convinced that far from weakness and aberration, they display, as life advances, as great if not increasing manliness and vigour.

Here then have we to hand a mighty influence and a willing subject. Let us not hesitate to avail ourselves of this potent charm, nor neglect to use the means which are within our reach, of educating the moral susceptibilities of the people, so that as by religion they are drawn to the contemplation of God and Divine things, so, through their sympathies, if not their understandings, they may be attracted to the threshold of art, to await with confidence the time, when together with all mankind they may be partakers of its perfect realisation.

F. DAVENPORT.

"PREMIÈRES AMOURS."

—♦—
"On revient toujours
A ses premières amours."

WHEN I called at the Hollies to-day,
In the room with the cedar-wood presses,
Aunt Deb. was just folding away
What she calls her "memorial dresses."

There's the frock that she wore at fifteen,—
Short-waisted, of course—my abhorrence ;
There's "the loveliest"—something in "een"
That she wears in her portrait by Lawrence ;

There's the "jelick" she used "as a Greek," (!)
There's the habit she got her bad fall in,
There's the sheeny old moiré antique
That she opened Squire Lavender's ball in :—

Sleek velvet and scrapey mohair,—
Soft muslin and bombazine stately,—
She had hung them each over a chair
To the paniers she's taken to lately

(Which she showed by mistake). And I thought,
As I conned o'er the cuts and the fashions,
That the faded old dresses back brought
All the ghosts of my pass'd-away "passions ;"—

From the days of love's earliest dream,
When the height of my boyish idea
Was to burn, like a young Polypheme,
For a somewhat mature Galatea.

There was Julia, who'd "tiffed" with her first,
And who threw me as soon as her third came ;
There was Norah, whose cut was the worst,
For she told me to wait till my "berd" came ;

Matilda, who longed but "to soar,
 Upon Music's ineffable pinion ;"
 Cornelia, who dared rather more,
 For she dabbled in Greek and Darwinian ;

Pale Blanche, who subsisted on salts,
 Stout Bertha, who lived upon Schiller,
 Fair Amy, who taught me to waltz,
 Plain Ann, that I wooed for the "siller ;"—

All danced round my head in a ring,
 Like "*Les Willis*" that somebody painted,
 All shapes of the sweet she-thing,—
 Shy, scornful, seductive, and sainted,—

To my Wife, in the days she was young—
 "How, Sir," says that matron, disgusted,
 "Do you dare to include ME among
 Your loves that have faded and rusted ?"

"Not at all," I, too frankly, retort.
 "I define (you can scarce need assurance)
 'Twixt the flames of poetical sort,
 And the rush-light of wedded endurance."

Full stop,—and a Sermon. But think,—
 There was surely good ground for a quarrel,—
 She had checked me when just on the brink
 Of (I feel) a remarkable Moral.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

MEMOIRS OF A CYNIC.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CONTRASTS."

V.

ARMED with my uncle's authority, I immediately hurried off to my friend Burton's house, and fortunately found him at home. I was so full of the object of my mission, and also so much out of breath with the rapidity of my pace, that when I arrived he easily perceived my visit was caused by no ordinary motive. Noticing the anxious expression on my face, Burton said to me,

"Why, my dear fellow, what ails you this morning? Have you been told that you are heir to a dukedom, or received the intelligence that your uncle is about to marry again, and intends to cut you off with a shilling? If neither of these, what other important subject occupies your mind? Tell me at once, and let me advise you if I can."

"Neither of the contingencies you speak of are likely to occur," I replied. "It is perfectly true, however, that I have something on my mind which causes me considerable anxiety, and I want you to assist me if you possibly can."

"Of that," replied Burton, "you may be perfectly certain. But what is it?"

I told him I had mentioned to my uncle my desire to enter the service of the East India Company, and that he had said he had no objection if it could be accomplished, but that he had no interest in the service, and could not assist me personally. That I had asked my uncle if I might apply to him (Burton), and he had not only given me permission to do so, but wished me success, as I seemed to have set my heart on entering the service.

"And now, Burton," I continued, "tell me candidly if you can in any manner aid me?"

"I am afraid my personal assistance will be of but little use to you," replied my friend. "I have no doubt my father can help you if he will, but the latter point is not certain. In the first place I am positive he will not do so unless he has an unqualified assurance from your uncle that he consents to your leaving England. In that case very possibly he may use his influence, and if he does he is pretty certain to succeed, as I believe he knows three-fourths of the captains in the service."

"Will you speak to him for me?" I asked.

"I would willingly do so," said Burton, "but it will be far better

and have more effect if you applied direct to him^{yourself}. Were I to do it, he might possibly think I had influenced you, which would make him perhaps chary in interfering in the matter. You, on the contrary, are a great favourite of his, and if the request comes spontaneously from you, he is much more likely to interest himself about it. In the meantime I will speak to my mother on the subject, and ask her to advance your interests as much as she possibly can; and if she takes the matter in hand, you may be pretty certain she will succeed. Now stop and dine with us," he continued; "I know they will be happy to see you, and besides I want to introduce you to my cousin Mary Anne, who is about to spend three weeks or a month with us. She is a very nice girl, and I'm sure you will like her."

I readily accepted the invitation, and by way of making the time pass agreeably before dinner, we went down to the docks and visited one of the ships which was preparing for that season's voyage—the *Vizagapatam*. She certainly was a beautiful ship, and we examined her attentively. She was far from being in a forward state, as she was then in the hands of the riggers, who were placing on her the masts and cordages, whilst the painters and carpenters were at work in putting up the fittings and bulkheads of the cabins of the officers. When I saw the noble ship, the thought came over me how proud I should be if I could possibly obtain an appointment on board of her; but even this wish was, I feared, a piece of presumption on my part. I asked one of the carpenters to show me a midshipman's cabin, and I certainly must confess I was somewhat surprised at its diminutive size. I should think it was about seven feet long, and six wide. This was the extreme. I can remember it well, as on the return voyage, small as it was, a long eighteen-pounder was placed in the cabin, which completely traversed it. However, I thought there would be quite room enough for me, and that I could make myself very comfortable in it, although I had not the slightest reason to believe I should ever occupy it.

We now returned home, and shortly afterwards dinner was announced. Mr. and Mrs. Burton received me in a most friendly manner, and the latter introduced me to her niece, Mary Anne. She was a girl about my own age, with fair complexion, very tall, and delicate-looking; in fact, she stooped considerably, occasioned evidently by weakness. Her face was pretty, and her voice mild and attractive; altogether she interested me greatly. I spoke but little to her during dinner, for I was not much used to ladies' society; in fact, I may conscientiously state that she was the first young *lady* in whose society I had ever been, for none ever visited the house of my uncle, nor did I see any while I was at school.

When the ladies retired from the table, Burton gave me a significant look, as much as to say, "You had better commence imme-

diately." Tremblingly I began by asking Mr. Burton whether there was much difficulty in obtaining an appointment in the East India Company's Service.

"That entirely depends upon the interest a candidate may have," he replied, "and what sort of a lad he is. If he is a gentlemanly young man," he continued, quitting the table and taking his seat in an easy chair in which he was accustomed to take a nap for half-an-hour every day after dinner, "the facilities are of course greater than if he were a bumpkin, for the captains now are very particular as to the class of young men they take under them." And here he yawned, and settled his head back in a corner of the chair as if preparing for sleep.

I felt greatly discouraged at his manner, and was about dropping the subject for the moment, when he suddenly roused himself, and looking at me attentively, said,—

"But why do you ask?"

"Because I want to know to whom my uncle ought to apply."

"You don't mean to say he is going to sea at his time of life?" said Mr. Burton, laughing. "He would make a pretty midshipman, certainly."

"Oh, no!" I replied, "he has no intention of doing anything of the kind. It was for myself I asked."

"Indeed! And do you really wish to become a sailor?" he said.

"Most earnestly," I replied.

"But tell me, am I to understand your uncle does not object to your entering the service?" he asked.

"He has no objection whatever," I said; "only having no interest himself, he does not know to whom to apply."

"Well, I will inquire for you," he said, after a moment's silence—and then again laying his head back in the chair, he prepared to go to sleep, while his son and I remained silent.

Presently he started up and said, "We will now join the ladies," and he then left the room.

I took the opportunity of stopping behind him to speak to his son. Before, however, I could utter a word, he said to me,—

"You're all right, old fellow. My father will do it for you."

"I don't know how you have arrived at such a conclusion, for he did not say anything about it," I said.

"My dear fellow, I know him as well as you know yourself. Didn't you see he tried to go to sleep and could not? That is always the case with him when anything interests him; if not, he would have slept soundly after dinner, even if a dozen military bands were playing outside the door. No, make yourself quite easy, you'll find all will come right, depend upon it."

We now went upstairs to the drawing-room, where I entered into a conversation with Mary Anne and her aunt. The former improved

very much on acquaintance, and conversed very agreeably. She left us early, however, her aunt informing me she had been ordered to do so by the physician, and that being of a delicate constitution she had come to London on purpose to be under the care of some first-rate medical man, as it was feared she might go into a rapid decline. I expressed my sorrow somewhat unintelligibly, although the information really shocked me very much, so greatly had I been pleased with the young lady's manner.

I soon after took my leave to return to my uncle's house. My friend Burton accompanied me to the door, and said to me,—

"Now, my dear fellow, don't be anxious or low-spirited. Your game is certain; and even in case my father's interest should flag in the matter, I will take good care my mother keeps it alive."

During the next week I heard nothing from Mr. Burton. I called once at the house, but none of the family were at home. I would willingly have called again the next day, but I did not like to appear importunate, and determined to put off another visit till the following week. Before the time had arrived for me to call again, I received a note from Mr. Burton, asking me to dine with him the next day, as he wished to speak to me. I need not say I willingly accepted the invitation; indeed, I believe that nothing but a serious accident would have kept me from the house. So great was my anxiety on my arrival, that positively I forgot the existence of Mary Anne, and it was not till after I had been in the house some little time that Mrs. Burton called my attention to her absence.

"She has been so poorly all day," she continued, "we thought it better she should keep her room. The physician says that all excitement will be prejudicial to her, and that she should enter into conversation as little as possible, for fear of tiring her lungs."

I expressed my sorrow rather clumsily, and shortly afterwards Mr. Burton and his son returned home.

During dinner not one word was spoken by Mr. Burton concerning the subject on which he wished to see me. As soon, however, as the cloth had been removed, he said,—

"And now, young gentleman, do you still continue your wish to go to sea?"

"More ardently than ever," I replied.

"Well, if so, and I have your uncle's written consent, I have obtained for you a berth as midshipman on board the *Vizagapatam*. She is bound for St. Helena, Bombay, and China, so you will have plenty of sea to get over before you return home. The captain of the ship is a gentlemanly man, and an intimate friend of mine; in fact, either as officer, sailor, or gentleman, there is not his superior in the whole fleet. I do not know much of the others, but suppose there will be the usual mixture among them—good, bad, and indifferent. However, you have got to rub your shoulder with the

world, and you will find out all these things for yourself. Had I better write to your uncle, or will he call on me?"

I replied, with my heart leaping for joy at the news I had heard, that I would speak to my uncle and request him to write, and I left early in the evening, wishing, if possible, to make my uncle write that night, so that no time need be lost.

My uncle received the information with his ordinary cold listlessness. He merely said,—

"I'm glad you are suited at last, my dear boy. Of the two, I would rather call on Mr. Burton, which will save him the trouble of coming here. I will write to-morrow, and ask him to make an appointment for me to call."

"Do you not think it would be better to write to-night, uncle?" I said. "I should be sorry if the appointment were given to any one else."

"Just as you please," he replied, yawning. "Get me the pen and ink, and I will write at once."

I immediately obeyed him, and after the letter was written to Mr. Burton and addressed, he gave it to me to post, which I did without delay.

The following day Mr. Burton wrote a reply, making an appointment for my uncle to call on him. We all three met together at his private office in George Court, Lombard Street. The offices themselves consisted of two separate rooms, one, marked "private," for himself, and the other appropriated to two clerks. We were ushered into the private room, and I introduced my uncle to Mr. Burton. The conversation was short and explicit. My uncle was as cool, apathetic, and clear-headed as usual, and it struck me that the effect the meeting had on Mr. Burton was to do away with all surprise on his part at my wishing to go to sea. With regard to matters of financial arrangement, Mr. Burton, who appeared to be well up in the subject, told my uncle he considered my outfit would be from a hundred to a hundred and twenty pounds, and there might be fifteen to twenty pounds more for other items. My uncle pleaded ignorance on all similar matters, and asked Mr. Burton if he would kindly take the superintendence on himself, and if so, he should be happy to place a cheque immediately in his hands. Mr. Burton consented to the arrangement, a cheque was drawn, and my uncle, about five minutes afterwards, quitted the office, nor have I any reason to believe that he and Mr. Burton ever met again.

I must say these arrangements met with my unqualified approbation. I knew perfectly well that Mr. Burton would place the principal portion of the duty on his son, so that it would be much the same as if I had had the expenditure of the money myself, plus the prudent surveillance of Mr. Burton. Nor was I mistaken in the conclusion I had arrived at, for the next morning Mr. Burton told

me I was to call at his office, when his son would introduce me to an outfitter in Leadenhall Street, from whom I should be able to purchase all the things necessary for my voyage.

I shall never forget the effect the outfitter's warehouse had on me, when I entered it the next morning in company with young Burton. Nay more, my idea of the dignity of a midshipman in the Company's service increased immensely from the reception I met with. Nothing could be more polite or respectful than the behaviour of the head of the firm, a most gentlemanly elderly man. When introduced to him, he placed two chairs at a table, one for me and the other for Burton, and then putting before us a printed list of necessaries for the voyage, comprising at least a hundred different articles, he stood by to give us his opinion, in case it should be required. We went down the list seriatim, and I should say out of the whole of the number of articles mentioned as absolutely required for a midshipman, three-fourths were utterly useless. Burton remarked that he thought many of the things were hardly necessary, and pointed them out. The outfitter bore the opinion resignedly, and the articles were struck out of the list. The number of shirts I ordered would, I think, have been one a-day from the time I left England till the ship returned again; and socks in equal proportion. Everything, without the slightest exception, that could possibly enter the mind of a midshipman to conceive, and even beyond it, was sold by the outfitter. He had books, including Bibles and Testaments, and I believe it is more than possible, had I looked more carefully down the list, I might have found instructions for making a will, or directions for pious thoughts preparatory to the celebration of the marriage ceremony. I bought a valuable sextant or quadrant, I forget which article it was, but I never used it.

Having made my selection from the list, the foreman of the tailors was summoned to make my various uniforms. If the behaviour of the outfitter himself had been so respectful to me, and raised my opinion of the dignity of a midshipman, that of the foreman of the tailors increased it greatly. The earnest manner in which he regretted the trouble he gave me when required to hold up my arm for the measure of the sleeve, or other similar formalities, delighted me much, as proving the excess of importance I had received since my appointment. I purchased goods to the amount of a hundred and twenty pounds, the bill for which was to be sent to Mr. Burton; and we then left the warehouse, being bowed out with every mark of humility by the outfitter, the foreman of the tailors, and other officials employed in the warehouse.

I dined the same day with the Burtons, and made a more intimate acquaintance with the delicate cousin Mary Anne, whose health had now sufficiently recovered to allow her to be present at the table. To say the truth she began to interest me exceedingly, and the

sympathy I felt for her, as I watched her drooping form, was great indeed. After dinner, when I mentioned confidentially to Mrs. Burton—a somewhat romantic lady—how delicate her niece appeared, she replied that she was indeed “a fragile tendril.” The expression struck me as being exceedingly appropriate, and I thought of it during my long walk home that evening, and I believe dreamt of it that night as well.

By way of saving trouble the outfitter was to send my uniform, dirk, &c., to Mr. Burton’s house, and the chest containing the remaining portion of my outfit on board the ship, marked with my name, and the three capital letters, M. M. M. (Midshipman’s Mess) with directions where it should be placed. The same day the ship dropped down to Gravesend, where, on a certain day, I was to join her. I tried on my uniform that evening, and received the compliments of Mrs. Burton and her niece on my appearance. I hardly think, even at the present day, they were undeserved, for although barely more than sixteen I was so tall that I appeared two years older, was well-made, and my face not altogether unhandsome, at any rate that was the conclusion I came to at the time, as I looked at myself in the glass. If I had had any doubt on the subject, it would have been dispelled by a remark I heard made by Mr. Burton, in confidence, to his wife: “A remarkably fine-grown young fellow that.”

It had been determined by my uncle that I should reside at the Burtons’ house until the ship left. This permission he gave with so little appearance of feeling that I felt rather annoyed at it, and said somewhat curtly, that I thought I had better take leave of him at once, to which he readily assented, and I left him without the slightest particle of regret on either side.

The following Sunday I attended divine worship at Limehouse Church, and on my way there and back, had the pleasure of having Mary Anne on my arm, as well as sitting next her in the pew. I had dressed myself in my uniform for the occasion, and excited, I think, a good deal of attention. The eyes of a great portion of the congregation I found were frequently directed on me, and I even thought the sermon had been preached especially for my benefit, though I afterwards learnt it was the one the reverend gentleman had preached regularly for many years at the beginning of the month of January, when ships were leaving for the Indies. He called the attention of captains and officers in authority over men, to the necessity of instructing them in the way they should go, and of taking care of their spiritual welfare, so as to order themselves in such a manner that they might be an example to the heathen in the different climes and parts they visited. They should show, he said, by their own pure lives and spotless characters, the blessings of Christianity and of Christian living, that the benighted pagans might say with wonder,

"Who can be the God of these men, whose lives are so free from sin and ungodliness?" What blessings would fall on the heads of those who carried out this system! And he was proud to say, that no body of men in the world carried out the principles of morality and Christianity to a greater extent than those who served in the ships of the merchant princes of England.

During the time the clergyman was making these remarks I looked at him attentively, trying to appear as if I were marking all he said, and treasuring up the advice he gave. I remember feeling rather puzzled at the time what expression to wear, and whether humility should be mixed up with it. But I then concluded a serious and marked attention would be better befitting the occasion, so I kept the muscles of my face as rigidly to that point as I could, and when I came out of church, I had some difficulty in relaxing them.

On quitting the churchyard, I saw outside a number of sailors, and wishing to wear as fully as possible that off-hand dignity of demeanour so characteristic of a naval officer, I held myself erect as I passed them. I did not even condescend to glance that way, and could not tell whether they touched their hats to me or not. One singular expression, however, fell on my ear which at the time I could hardly understand. A sailor in the group, evidently a ribald drunkard, said as I passed, "Company's candlestick!" It soon faded from my memory, and I should perhaps have forgotten it altogether had I not heard it afterwards.

I remained at Mr. Burton's house, before being ordered to join the ship, fully a week longer, during which time I had frequent opportunities of being in the company of Mary Anne. The more I saw of her, the more I liked her, and the more anxious became my inquiries respecting her health. When conversing with Mrs. Burton on the subject she frequently made use of the expression "fragile tendril," and on one occasion she told me, with tears in her eyes, that the physician had said the poor girl had not, unless by a miracle, twelve months' life in her. This intelligence caused me continued pain till the departure of the ship, for even if in her absence it subsided for a moment, it burst out afresh directly I saw her again.

The day for my joining the ship at last arrived, and I made preparations for leaving the Burtons' house. I arrayed myself in my full uniform, including the dirk and hat with the cockade, leaving my old clothes to be given to any poor person who might want them. I then took leave of my friends with many expressions of kind regard on both sides. It struck me that when I bade Mary Anne farewell I saw tears in her eyes, and lest my feelings should be too much for me, I was obliged to turn my head aside and hurry off to the hackney coach, which was waiting to take me to Billingsgate, where I should find a boat to Gravesend. Once in the coach I gave unrestrained vent to my emotions, and leaning back, so that my eyes

might not dwell on anything that was passing, and thus my attention be disturbed, I thought of the interesting creature I had left.

In this strain my thoughts continued till the coach had arrived in Lower Thames Street, when, from the block of carts which crowded the narrow thoroughfare, I was obliged to descend from the vehicle and continue my way on foot. I pushed through the crowd as well as I could, and entered Billingsgate market, which was then far from being the well-organised institution it is at the present day; for during business hours, to the eye of the uninitiated, it was a scene of the wildest confusion. Market was just over when I arrived, and the whole of the assistants, fishwomen and salesmen, were congregated together, laughing, scolding, and jesting, to the fullest extent of their lungs. On entering the market I drew myself up to my full height, and, with a sort of determined air, such as I had noticed naval men in authority assume, passed onward. Presently I heard some sailor near me say "Company's candlestick!" I remembered having heard it before, and the coincidence struck me forcibly, and I wondered what it could mean. Then I reached a block of fishwomen and others conversing together in a state of great excitement about something that had occurred during that morning's market, and my way was again impeded. Instead of asking them to allow me to pass, I, with an authoritative air, pushed by them, which seemed to annoy them greatly; for one of their number, a tall masculine-looking virago, said, as I passed, "There he goes, Company's candlestick!"

I turned round indignantly, and asked what she meant by insulting an officer and a gentleman in such an unprovoked manner. Instead of replying to my question, she only repeated the insult, which was taken up by all the others present, both male and female. I looked scornfully at them for a moment, and then considering how derogatory it would be for me to quarrel with them, I turned away and proceeded towards the boat. They all followed me, however, and others joined the crowd, calling out as they did so, "There he goes, Company's candlestick!" I was so annoyed that I turned round with the intention of attacking one of the foremost of my male tormentors, when again prudence got the better of me, and I went on till I reached the boat. I descended to the deck, nor were they content even then, but kept calling out from above, "There he goes, Company's candlestick!" clapping their hands the while to keep time.

At last, thoroughly enraged, I turned round, and placing myself in such a threatening heroic attitude that the statue of Ajax defying the lightning was, in comparison, but a feeble, washed-out, water-coloured sketch, I explained to them that they were nothing better than a set of ill-bred ruffians. One of the ladies among them, on hearing my words, seized a quantity of fish refuse, which she flung at me. It fortunately missed me, and fell on the deck. The mate of

the boat, however, fearing for the cleanliness of his decks, requested me to go below, or I might have other unsavoury compliments of the kind paid me. I thought it better to follow his advice, and, in a somewhat undignified manner, crept down the ladder into a little cabin,—for at the time I am writing of steamers were not invented. Although safe from their missiles, I was not in any manner sheltered from their insults, for I could hear, I believe, every male and female voice among them still calling out “Company’s candlestick! Company’s candlestick!” and thankful indeed was I when the captain gave orders to unmoor the boat, and we started with the tide down the river.

VI.

It seemed that day I was doomed to be disappointed in everything. On my arrival on board the *Vizagapatam*, I asked a sailor to whom I ought to report myself.

“To the officer on deck,” he replied, pointing to a dirty-looking young man, the fifth mate, who apparently had just left the hold.

“All right, young fellow,” he said. “You’ve not come before you’re wanted. Just go down into the hold, will you, and report yourself to the sixth officer, who is superintending the stowage of some water casks. But if you’d take my advice you’d shift that magnificent rig of yours, and put on something a little more ship-shape, or you’ll find your splendid appearance considerably blemished before you leave the hold.”

I must say I felt much annoyed at the reception I met with, and went below to the gun deck, where I saw written on a door, the words, “Purser’s steward.” Inside the cabin there was a dirty-looking man, whom I politely asked to show me my cabin.

“Certainly,” he said; “come this way.” He took me to the cabin I had visited when the ship was in the docks, and in which I found my sea chest. “This,” continued he, “is your berth, and you’re a lucky fellow, for I expect you won’t have any other midshipmen on board for the next week to come.”

“But where are their cabins?” I inquired.

“Their cabins!” he said, with a look of astonishment. “This is as much theirs as yours. Here the whole of you will eat, drink, and assemble for the next eighteen months, and your hammocks will be slung in the steerage. But now I must leave you.”

I must say I felt completely aghast at this intelligence, and as soon as I was alone, I seated myself on my sea chest, where I remained for some time. The mate whom I had seen on the deck then passed the cabin door, and seeing me seated, he said to me,—

“Didn’t I tell you to go to the fore-hold and place yourself under the orders of the sixth officer? You’d better do so at once, for

remember that on board this ship you will find it the rule that as soon as an order is given it must be obeyed."

Although he said this by no means in an offensive tone, I felt considerably annoyed; but opening my sea chest at once, I arrayed myself in a commoner suit of clothes, and went below into the hold, which appeared enormous. With some difficulty, in the obscure light of the few candles, I distinguished the sixth mate, and told him I had come on board.

"That's right," he said. "Now just take this lantern and light the men who are at work forward."

I now, for the first time, began to have some idea of the meaning of the words "Company's candlestick," which was, I afterwards fully discovered, a nickname applied to midshipmen, in consequence of a portion of their duties being to take charge of the lanterns when ship's stores and other commodities were being stowed away in the hold.

I remained in the hold till it was time for the hands to leave off work, when the sixth officer told me that as the midshipmen's mess had not been yet arranged I was to mess for the next few days with the officers. I now went to my cabin, and again put on my uniform, and the signal being given that dinner was ready, I proceeded to the cuddy or mess-room of the officers. On my entrance in full uniform, I was greeted by a loud laugh from the four officers present, one of whom, the third officer, told me they would excuse me for the future making so brilliant an appearance, and that on another occasion undress uniform, with clean hands and face, would be quite sufficient. During dinner, the conversation passed gaily between the officers, but not one word was addressed to me. As soon as the meal was over, and the wine and spirits put on the table, the third officer said coolly to me,—

"That will do, young fellow, you may now make yourself scarce."

During the time which elapsed between my arrival and that of my brother midshipmen, my life was a solitary one indeed; for although I took my meals with the officers, a word was never addressed to me by any of them, and as soon as the meal was over I was ordered to leave. During the day I was tolerably employed in pursuing my duties (as "Company's candlestick" in the hold), and in the evening I used, when the weather was fine and not too cold, to wrap myself in my watch coat and sit on one of the quarter-deck carronades or hen-coops, on the poop, and meditate. At least, I tried to meditate, for I rather liked the word, although I must say my meditations centred chiefly on Mary Anne and the unhappy fate evidently in store for her. I remember one afternoon I determined to write her a parting ode, which I devoutly hoped she would keep by her till her death. I never, however, completed more than about a dozen lines. The fact was, many insuperable difficulties arose in my way. I got through the first few lines well enough. I remember well my first

difficulty in the composition. It occurred in the following three lines :—

When first I saw thy pretty face,
At number two Commercial Terrace,
Sweet smiles and blushes darting—

The difficulty here arose as to "Commercial Terrace." On the one hand it appeared to give the simplicity of diction and *vraisemblance* to the verse which was desirable; on the other, "Commercial Terrace" seemed to destroy a great deal of the pathos. Then, again, I met with other difficulties in the versification, till at last I threw it aside and went on deck to meditate on the "fragile tendril" whom the world was so soon to lose. From that moment, however, my sympathy for her gradually decreased, and I believe it entirely dwindled away during a storm we encountered in the Bay of Biscay. Her life, I am happy to say, was spared. A few years since, when walking with a friend through Lincoln's-inn-Fields, a tall, elderly, and very corpulent lady came out of one of the offices and entered an open carriage standing by the pathway. My friend, who knew her, conversed with her for a few moments, and then joined me. On asking who she was, I found she was the wife of a barrister in large practice, and the mother of some ten children, and, in the course of his description, found she was the "fragile tendril" whose anticipated unhappy fate had caused me so much sorrow in my youth.

The early days of a midshipman's life when first he joins a ship, and the broken illusions which occur during the time, have been so often and so fully described, that it would be useless on my part to occupy the time of the reader by relating the occurrences which befell me. Suffice it to say, before the end of a week all my preconceived notions of an officer and a gentleman had been thoroughly dissipated, and nothing but the stern truth remained behind, that the charms of the service had been greatly overrated. At the time I became a midshipman the Honourable East India Company's Service was considered a better and more gentlemanly occupation than the sea service in similar ships is in the present day. How this conclusion was arrived at I know not; certainly nothing could be more detestable than the life I led when in the service. The position of the officers in society was far inferior to that of officers in His Majesty's service, although they were much better paid. Of this difference in their social position they seemed to be fully aware, and by way of rectifying it as far as possible, they tried to imitate the bearing and manners of the royal officers, and frequently caricatured them. A sort of gradation, or class, was established on board their ships, which on that of a high admiral would have been considered simply ridiculous. As a proof of their importance, they had introduced on board many of their ships a brutality and severity which would have been regarded as utterly infamous on board the most rigidly disciplined ship of war.

As a midshipman I held a sort of neutral position. I was expected to maintain a gentlemanly demeanour, and dress far above the sailors ; but at the same time it was a crime little less than mutiny to consider that while I held the position of midshipman, I was at less than an unapproachable distance, in point of dignity, from the sixth mate. Shortly before sailing my five other messmates joined the ship. They were all sons of gentlemen, and of fair average education. Things went on very smoothly among us, and as far as our mess was concerned we had but little to complain of. We were divided into three watches, two in each watch, which rendered the duties by no means too onerous.

In the course of a couple of months we had all of us shaken down tolerably well into the performance of our several duties. We were often punished by mast-heading, and that too for very trifling offences. As a rule, with the exception of the captain, we cordially detested the officers of our ship, and not without reason. The officer of my own watch was a singularly objectionable character. He had formerly been in the navy, but had been constrained to leave the service from some act he had committed, and had then entered the East India Company's service. That he was a good seaman there was little doubt—that he was a ruffian was certain. The other officers imitated him as much as they could, thinking thereby to gain something of the tone and manner of the royal navy.

In due time the ship arrived at St. Helena, where she remained for some weeks. Here we took on board two companies of the ——th regiment of foot, and several extra officers and their families whom we were to convey to Bombay. During this part of the voyage I had another access of the tender passion. Among the passengers on board the ship was a young lady who particularly attracted my attention. She was the daughter of Major C——, a kind-hearted, gentlemanly man, but whose position of course was so superior to that of the unfortunate East India Company's midshipmen, that anything in the shape of acquaintanceship, or even conversation, with the young lady was impossible.

Maria C—— was an exceedingly pretty girl, about sixteen or seventeen years of age. She was evidently, from the expression of her countenance (for I never but once had the pleasure of speaking to her), exceedingly amiable. It was perfect happiness for me to see her come on deck. I used to watch her each afternoon, with her mother and sister, when the band was playing, and I sincerely envied the military officers who fluttered around her. On these occasions my eyes used to be incessantly riveted on her, and I was often severely rated by my superior officers for my inattention to my duties.

At last I felt certain she noticed me, but most probably only from the fact of my incessantly gazing at her when on deck. She evidently mentioned my behaviour to her sister, for the latter used to regard

me in a peculiar inquisitive sarcastic manner. I hardly think she mentioned it to her mother, at least I never had any reason to believe from that lady's conduct that she was even aware of my existence.

My affection for Maria increased to such an extent, that at last I grew desperate, and I determined, cost what it might, notwithstanding our fearful difference in position, to make known to her my passion. But how to do this was a difficulty indeed. To address her personally on the subject was of course impossible. Her mother was a cross-grained, ill-tempered woman, who, when not prostrated by seasickness, which unfortunately rarely occurred, had her eyes incessantly fixed on her daughters. I had too much dread of her to think of broaching the subject to her, even if my position would not have made such an act presumptuous.

There existed only one member of Maria's family with whom there was the slightest probability of my forming an intimacy, and that was her young brother, a boy about eleven years of age. I immediately broke ground with him, and succeeded admirably. I commenced by giving him a pressing invitation to the midshipmen's berth, where we sumptuously regaled him with some plum-duff and other delicacies, which I afterwards understood disagreed with him. By degrees our acquaintance ripened into intimacy, and then, after binding him over to eternal secrecy, I confided to him my unhappy consuming passion for his sister. Young as he was, and inexperienced in such matters, he kindly sympathised with me, and promised to assist me in every way in his power. I advised him to begin by pointing me out to his sister, and telling her how vastly superior I was to the other midshipmen, and then to hint gently to her how incessantly I was talking and thinking of her. This I considered would be as much as would be prudent for a commencement.

In a short time he told me his sister had remarked me favourably, and thought me very good-looking. Here was encouragement for me. Of course I sent word back that she was the loveliest girl I had ever seen. The next day she smiled kindly when she saw me. We were then within a fortnight's sail of Bombay. I used to weep bitterly in the night-watches when I thought that on her arrival there, I should see her no more. Sometimes I thought of deserting the ship and enlisting as a private in her father's regiment, but then our difference in position would even be greater than it was at present, so I gave over that idea. At last I summoned up sufficient courage to tell her brother how happy I should be if he could obtain from her some little object that I might keep as a memento of her. He asked what I should like, and I modestly left it to his discretion. He suggested a lock of hair, to which, as may easily be supposed, I gave a ready consent. I assured him such a gift was more than my

wildest imagination could have hoped for; that the possession of such a treasure would make me happy for life.

Bad weather then set in, and I did not see either the sister or brother again for some days. He was exceedingly delicate, and during the rain his mother confined him a prisoner to the cuddy. When I saw him again, he placed in my hand, without saying a word, a small folded paper about the size of a shilling. Anxious to know what it contained, I immediately rushed below, and with some difficulty contrived to open it unseen by anyone—no easy task, as solitude is rare in a midshipmen's berth. The paper contained a long but very thin tress of bright auburn hair, which I knew immediately by its beautiful colour and silky texture to be his sister's.

Never, I believe, was happiness equal to mine at that moment. The same day, I, clumsily enough, made out of the tail of one of my shirts a small bag. How grateful was I, at the time, for the foresight of Mrs. Burton, who had placed a housewife of her own manufacture in my sea-chest, which, at that critical moment, supplied me with needle and thread. The bag, when finished, was just large enough to hold the hair in its paper envelope. Out of respect to my treasure, I took particular pains in making the bag, and was not a little proud of it when finished. I then fastened it to a piece of spun-yarn, and placing it round my neck, wore it next my heart with all the respect due to a saintly relic.

The ship arrived at Bombay. On the day of Maria's quitting it I determined to speak to her. It required no little courage, but true love will encounter any risk. An opportunity at length presented itself. She was standing near the gangway, a little behind her family, who were waiting for a boat to take them on shore.

"Thanks, a thousand thanks," I said, "for your kind present! I wear it next my heart, and it shall never leave me."

The girl looked intensely astonished. "I don't understand you," she said aloud.

Her mother, hearing her speak, looked round, and asked what she had said.

"This gentleman," replied Maria hesitatingly, "made some remark, but I did not hear what it was."

"What is it you want, young man?" said her mother haughtily.

I was so taken aback that I could not answer a word, but sneaked sheepishly away. The mother mentioned the circumstance to her husband, who immediately reported it to the officer on watch,—the one already described as having been in the navy. He questioned me on the subject, but I refused to answer him a word, and was in consequence sent to the mast-head as a punishment. The old cat of a mother suspected there was something concealed, and of course was determined to find it out. Before leaving the ship she told the second officer he would greatly oblige her if he would make

inquiries, and let her know the result. He premised he would do so, and the family then went on shore.

That afternoon I heard nothing more on the subject. The next morning, however, when I went on duty, Mr. B., the second officer, called me before him.

"I very much suspect, young gentleman," he began, "that there is something more between you and that young lady than is generally known. Now I want to hear all the particulars; so have the kindness to inform me."

"I shall not give you any information on the subject," I replied; "and as the affair is not in any manner connected with the duties of the ship, you are not justified in demanding it."

"Let me give you warning not to speak to me in that manner, sir," he said, "as I don't choose to put up with it."

"I say again, you are not justified in acting in such a manner," I replied, firing up; "and more than that, in demanding it of me, you have committed an action unworthy of an officer and a gentleman."

"How dare you make use of that language to me?" he said. "Do you know who I am, and who you are? Don't imagine I will allow such a breach of discipline to be committed in any ship in which I am officer. Go to the mast-head, sir, and stop there till the hammocks are piped down in the evening. Do the same to-morrow, and your punishment shall continue till you give me a full reply to the question I asked you. It's a lucky thing for you," he continued, "that you are not in the navy. If you were, by — you'd get yourself hung for mutiny in less than a month."

"I am sorry I am not in the navy," I replied, mounting the rigging to go to my place of punishment. "Any naval officer would be ashamed to show his face who had been told he had acted in an ungentlemanly manner, at any rate without challenging the person who had insulted him, or would have considered it beneath him to have used his power instead, in the manner you have done with me."

"Possibly, sir," he said, "you intend that as an indirect challenge?"

"You will greatly oblige me by considering it as such," I called out to him, as I continued ascending the rigging.

He made no reply to me for a moment, but turned round and continued walking the deck; when, however, I was half-way up the main-topmast rigging, he called out,—"Come down, sir."

"I half suspect," he said, when I had reached the deck, "that you are not so great a fool as you look, or you would not have had the cunning to have played the game you have. At any rate, I admit you have succeeded. Not in impressing me that I was not justified in my behaviour, but that I don't choose so great a lie should be believed for one moment,—that I, an officer in His Majesty's service, am capable of using power in punishing any one who has challenged

me, without first bringing the subject before a court martial, or Court of Inquiry as we call it in this service. Now, I'll look over your behaviour this time; but mark well my promise, for by — I'll keep it. The next time you attempt to offer me a challenge, or in the most remote manner to forget the respect due to me as your superior officer, I'll simply have you tried, and sent before the mast; and for the first offence you commit there, however slight it may be, I'll take good care you are lashed up to the gratings, and have a sound three dozen as a reward. Now, go to your duty, and let me hear nothing more of you."

I obeyed him, and the subject dropped.

Although my quarrel with the second officer put Maria's behaviour somewhat out of my mind for a few days, I was still greatly puzzled how to explain it. The girl's look of surprise was certainly genuine; still, I had received the lock of hair from her, and had it in my possession. However, at last the mystery was cleared up. Before the ship left Bombay I was allowed one day's holiday on shore, and there, by chance, met Maria's brother. I requested him to tell me how the mistake occurred which was the cause of my making such a fool of myself. I found it was quite true that it was his sister's hair I had been wearing for so many days next my heart, but at the same time she was not aware it was in my possession. During the week her brother had been confined to the cabin by the wet weather, he had taken the opportunity of secretly collecting from his sister's hair-brush the stray hairs, and when he had obtained sufficient had formed them into the tress he had given me. He had thought the possession of it was all I wished for, and how obtained a matter of little importance.

(To be continued.)

TWO MILLIONAIRES.

THEY covered his face :—last grim seizure in bed,
Long years of repletion had given ;
But he always said “ grace ” o’er rich feasts when he fed,
So his chaplain equipp’d him for heaven.

“ Wise Nature is Spartan in taste, my dear friend, ”—
His physician had hinted at fifty ;
Then dismiss’d with last fee, he made last courtly bend ;
His successors—of counsel were thrifty.

So at sixty he died. “ Dead at last ! ” said, with grin,
Rain-soaked hinds o’er their spades, hedging, ditching ;
“ Ah ! he’s gone ! ” sigh’d poor widow in garret, worn thin ;
Her sempstress-way, Zionward, stitching.

Hives of workers, from cellar to garret, mean wage
Took of him for their hunger. Wealth-heaping,
Cent. per cent. was his hunger, well-glutted on rage,
Shame, sharp want, and fierce bursts of weeping.

Wealth wrung out of Want, who espies o’er park pales ?
Dappled deer stand in fern, or troop questing ;
Dream-like in blue distance the swan slowly sails ;
Ring-doves coo :—O most exquisite jesting

Hath Belial, transmuting fair scene thro’ coarse brain,
Into opiate to drowse conscience-clamour ;
Beauty—alchemized fair out of foul-gotten gain !
Sin—assoiled by the auctioneer’s hammer !

Prince of Lies has deft art to slide play within play,
Base men act before world ill-perceiving ;
Park-ownership spreads sweet contagion in way
Of thousands—who shrink from trade-thieving.

Sylvan charm of the landscape constrains gentlest “ Hush,
Hush, hush, ” of the nice world, adjusting
Silk-soft phrase, while Wealth witches up fountains to gush—
Till the cheating fool, cheated to trusting,

Believes in—High-Life ! high-life looks up *his* life ;
Spins him round like teetotum on table ;
Shoots his pheasants ; makes she-fool of his jewel-neck'd wife ;
And rich prize of his daughter, if able.

Such a fool was this dead man. Full-blown Millionaire,
So his funeral was costly and splendid ;
The Archdeacon of Goldcross mourned manfully there,
And the Bishop of Merelawn attended.

How favour'd is Goldcross, where dean's mansion blest
Peers thro' groves all Spring's choristers rich in ;
But why must meek curate, hard-work'd and mean-drest,
Look like pauper by cook of club-kitchen ?

Good Bishop, we trust churches save, white as snow,
Poor souls huddled dark in life's steerage ;
But say, did that Star in the East shine to show
Where lay Babe—or your place in the peerage ?

Far light, how thou farest ! Sharp the orthodox-turns,
From that "cup" to fierce lawsuits o'er chalice ;
From the manger-laid Babe, where dim stable-light burns,
To church militant throned in a palace.

Meanwhile no small Dives his conscience need chafe,
His modest half-million to fish up ;
Here was three-million-power of wealth, pronounced safe
By venerable Archdean and Lord Bishop.

Why not ? Threadbare Honour we spurn ; rotund wealth
Warms to worship our souls, clear from sham on ;
This Millionaire massed not his riches by stealth—
Built his ingots four-square up to Mammon !

Faced both worlds ; minted manhood ; his heart spurr'd and lash'd,
Rear'd it back from torn hairs, tears thick-pelting ;
Would have dragg'd down fork'd lightnings round Sinai that flash'd,
To fuse bullion—and save cost of smelting.

His tomb was to be—Mausoleum of size,
And the people lined all the approaches ;
But there was not one tear in long lane of their eyes,
Nor one tear in the long string of coaches.

"He brought nothing in : he can take nothing out :
He awaits Resurrection-trump stirring :"
I heard ; but o'er grand words crept chill films of doubt,
When I thought what awaited interring.

All is over : coffin lower'd, and rattles the mould,—
 Poor Cræsus ! in darkness abiding :
 The hard-mouth'd heir looks down, with seemly white fold,
 His ill-suppress'd countenance hiding.

“ ‘*Sworn under*’—how much ? so to millions he throve,
 Probate-tax will be pot of state-honey ! ”
 So chatter'd his friends, as their carriages drove
 Full fast from dead man back to money.

From his grave, all unwept, all the people had flown ;
 None had stolen thro' the gates to bemoan him ;
 Not even a dog, for his master alone,
 Had crept there with dumb meaning to own him.

O parasite world, whom to feast was his pride !
 Light you roll from his grave and forget him ;
 While a hound—had he loved one—would cling to his side,
 Day and night, and die here, would we let him.

Half I wept. The harsh noise of the world roll'd away.
 He was done with. Now never more round him,
 Last linger of love none can utterly slay,
 Till the worm for her feasting has found him.

And thro' the long grasses the night-wind shall sigh,
 Holy Night come, and breathe round her spirit :
 And processions of stars pass, that once from on high
 Bade him rise, and aspire, and inherit.

“ No dreams ! solid wealth ! ”—he made answer—and then
 Dream'd his dream, till Death-roused from possessing,
 He was borne away empty from world full of men,
 Men in millions—no tear, not one blessing.

Borne away past all worlds ; phantom sight, phantom sound !
 His own world—great arena of Being—
 Save for gold, he found empty ! where fulness is found
 For him—the soul shudders from seeing.

He was not like that Stranger from Land of the West,
 Wealth by sheer force of intellect riving ;
 Then he stripp'd off his millions, and lay down to rest,
 That the poor might have joy of his striving.

Wealth, won in our England, on altar he laid,
 Of his heart, heaven-touched, and dissolving,
 It flow'd thro' waste places, and music was made,
 Heaven-heard, by our world in revolving.

And light, and new song, that shall herald new morn,
Live, and leap from the lyre in telling ;
And dance in the smile of the baby unborn,—
Babe of workman in Peabody's dwelling !

For he made it, then gave it, and that was sublime :
Kingly worth in that deed was unfolden—
The Republican sits on a throne of the time,
With heart-sway o'er both hemispheres holden.

And the heart of the nation was touch'd : and took heed
That a hero of commerce had glory !
And to save from oblivion his beautiful deed,
For renown, and remembrance in story,

Lo, his Statue smiles full on great mart of our land !—
Silent lips Christ's divine thought expressing ;
And pilgrims to Britain come thither to stand,
And uncover, and pass on with blessing.

'Midst the roaring of London, how calm sits he there,
Smiling peace o'er the people loud-surfing !
And the smile of his peace passeth on unaware,
Thro' their hearts, to their faces emerging.

The mother, hand-holding her boy, shall draw nigh,
And breathe in the young heart, thoughts sowing
That shall kindle his spirit, flash light to his eye,
From a Source that is not of our knowing.

Children's children shall say—Behold ! Peabody smiles,
As he smiled, when, all title and station
Waived aside, he accepted from Queen of the Isles,—
Just her portrait to give to his nation.

Shine out, noble Deed ! Shine from hovel to hall,
Shine where sharp Want man's visage defeatures ;
Shine thro' Millionaire's blindness, and write on his wall—
YOUR MILLIONS ARE YOUR FELLOW-CREATURES.

Science strains searching gaze on far future for light,
For light is the poet's deep yearning ;
It glimmers, recedes, star-crown'd height is no height,
Straight-hewn roads end in labyrinths of turning.

Nor streams light thro' wires that link race to race,
Under oceans ; nor from harps of our stringing ;
Love, only, prevails to inviolate place,
And returneth, vouchsafed, and light-bringing.

Grow, light born of love—light illuming dark den
Of squalor, and ignorance hiding ;
Grow, move over faces of armies of men ;
And that light—shall be light abiding.

Grow, light of Christ's charity ; beam in our souls,
Lest our personal ambitions enslave us ;
Our glory allures even the best to false goals,
Our creeds cringe ; our riches deprave us.

But thy tender halo of light shall remain ;
Perpetual thy smile on our going ;
Are we victors ? without thee all conquest is vain :
Do we know ? thou art best of our knowing.

Keen-eyed watch the People ; class-gulfs widen still ;
Wealth and Want look askance, each distrusting ;
Modern Sisypheus climbs to roll his stone down hill ;
But hath avalanche eyes for adjusting ?

Well-won wealth is just product of bold heart, clear brain ;
Let it prosper to millions ! not lurking,
But graciously mixing its strength with the strain
Of this wonderful age, and its working.

Lest levers, wealth-forcing, prove but giant-lies,
That shall snap in a coming commotion ;
Slowly, slowly, the tide rises high—but doth rise ;
And behind is a storm-crested ocean !

Behold ! men are dead who make temples of marts ;
Dead ere spirit from body dis sever ;
But PEABODY lives—lives in warm-beating hearts
Of two great kindred nations for ever.

SUMNER.

A LADY ORATOR ON THE JOINT EDUCATION OF WOMEN AND MEN.

COUNTRY cousins now-a-days manage to see and hear almost everything that is notable in London, but there must be some of them who do not know St. George's Hall, Langham Place, or, by personal observation, the uses to which it is put on Sundays. St. George's Hall is not far from the Polytechnic, and that church with the extraordinary spire which nobody with eyes in his head will ever, having once seen it, forget,—anymore than he can cease to remember that almost equally queer one out Brick Lane way, or that other strange structure near Limehouse, the "spire" of which is an Ionic column topped with a lightning conductor. St. George's Hall has its main entrance in Langham Place, and it has side doors in Mortimer Street, the latter being used for holders of reserved tickets at meetings and religious services. My acquaintance with the building began in the days when it was opened for English Opera; and a most dreary evening I once spent there, while a new work of art in that kind was being dragged through in the hearing of a skeleton audience. My next visit to the place was to hear Mr. Voysey's pro-christening service—when the place was full, and the whole thing animated and interesting, though the sermon was unnecessarily controversial, and there was a want of repose and artistic keeping. These effects it might be difficult to secure for such a service in such a place,—a theatre, with private boxes, curtain, proscenium, and all the rest; Mr. Voysey, too, though very sincere and unobtrusive in manner, being himself a note-of-interrogation sort of man, with life enough in him for six agitators. The third and last time I went to St. George's Hall, Langham Place, was to hear a lecture by Miss Mary K. Beady, M.A. of Antioch, U.S., on colleges for the joint education of men and women. It was late in last spring, and the lecture was, I think, the last of the series given that season by the Sunday Lecture Society.

I was there in good time, expecting to find a crowd, but the place was only moderately well filled by three in the afternoon. In front of the drop-scene, just where the shade is placed for the lime light, was a desk, at which Miss Beady was to stand. I had heard Miss Kemble and Miss Glyn read in public, and had wondered on this occasion whether there would or would not be a table and chair as usual, and whether or not the lady would be led on by a gentleman,

and again attended by one when the lecture closed. I concluded that under the circumstances this arrangement would be considered out of moral keeping ; and the conclusion proved to be correct.

Among the audience, my eye soon caught types as diverse as the faces of Mr. Andrew Johnston, M.P., and the author of "Man and his Dwelling-place." There were many others that I knew, and altogether it was an audience of good faces. You involuntarily said to yourself, "Nice people." The reader may probably have noticed that at unorthodox places of the better type, the heads and faces are usually much better than those you would see at an ordinary church or chapel. The reason is obvious—whether their opinions are right or wrong, these people are pretty sure to have plenty of faith, hope, and idealising power, and to be capable of self-sacrifice for principle's sake (while at the ordinary orthodox place a large part of the audience are simply respectable imitators). I say self-sacrifice with some emphasis, because, in spite of all we hear about the absence of persecution now-a-days, there is, in truth, plenty of the indirect kind, and it is only the rich who can well afford to keep convictions. I repeat then, that at many unorthodox places you see a set of very good countenances—and such a set I saw upon this occasion. Two drawbacks there often are in these cases. You see here and there the intellectually conceited face, and sometimes, the hard, scolding, rebellious, unimaginative face. I do not know that these are worse than two types which you are sure to see in abundance at church or chapel,—how *shall* we name them?—the full-fed-ruffian-church-and-state face ; and the other-worldly, or christianity-and-shop face ; but——

But let the unpleasant faces go ; for here comes Miss Beady to the front, and hers is a pleasant one. She lifts the drop-scene at the left hand side, and steps forward unattended to the desk. The lady looks a little, a very little timid, but she is received with a good hearty round of applause, and is almost instantly at her work as a lecturer. I carefully noted her dress, at the time, but can only now remember that her bonnet was trimmed with blue. She looked to me about thirty years old : and she had rather a plump, oval face, without much colour. At her first accents I saw several people smile and whisper—there was the national twang, no mistake about it. Then the lady went on to say that she had such things to tell that she hardly hoped to be credited, but that she should tell her story very simply, and rely upon "an honest face," to get herself believed. Another round of applause testified to the general impression that Miss Beady had an honest face ; and she certainly had ; a nice frank friendly face. I watched it very closely, both while she was lecturing, and while she was shaking hands with persons to whom she was afterwards introduced—indeed I had taken an opera-glass with me, but found no chance of using it on the sly, and had not the impudence to use it openly—and I liked her.

The reader must please not to imagine here that I went to this lecture with any particular prejudice to be propitiated. I simply record my impressions as a reporter.

It struck me, among other trifles, that the lecture had been "pointed for applause"—is that the right phrase?—and had been delivered before. The lady appeared to me to pull up at certain places, where it was probable the audience would clap—for instance at the mention of Dr. Arnold's name. But very likely I am wrong here, and it is quite right to "point" a lecture in this way; indeed, it may be added, necessary. In my own lecturing days I used always to be rebuked for never making half an instant's pause, clapping or no clapping. And one remembers what Mrs. Siddons (?) said when some one remarked that the applause of an audience gave you courage—"Better than that," said Lady Macbeth—"it gives you breathing-time." At all events Miss Beady was several times interrupted by evidently sincere and simple-hearted applause from her evidently intelligent listeners.

I suppose, then, a great deal of what she said was new to the gentlemen present; but what surprised me a little, after her opening, was that her lecture contained so little that was likely to be new to an Englishman who had read what was easily accessible to him upon the subject. The lecture was exceedingly clear, moderate in tone, and well considered. If there had been present persons requiring to be conciliated, it was admirably adapted to meet their case. And it was, of course, especially interesting because Miss Beady stood there before us in body and bonnet, Mistress of Arts from the very identical Antioch, U. S.—a cultivated lady, pleasantly yet fearlessly going over the whole field of university culture from a special point of view. The only thing in the lecture which was new to me was the case of a young lady who solved a certain test-problem in mathematics which for many years male students had failed to solve. But it could not be surprising to any tolerably well-read person. All depends on who the lady-student is. No one lifts his eyebrow on reading in Mr. Herbert Spencer's *Psychology* that the author of "*Silas Marner*" had suggested in conversation with him an important modification of one of the canons of reasoning. Nor ought anyone to be surprised at hearing that from the point of view of morality and even propriety, no evil results have been found to follow from the joint education of men and women in colleges. True, English sentiment in these matters is apt to be brutal; but the opinion of men and women such as those Miss Beady was addressing is likely to be no more than cautious and considerate.

One of Miss Beady's points was, I fancied, not taken by the audience. After remarking that the conjoint pursuit by lads and lasses of certain scholastic ends, under conditions of commonplace familiarity, was not found favourable to love-affairs, she added that under these dull quasi-domestic conditions there was still some room

left for imagination to do its usual work between boys and girls. A very faint stress on the "some" suggested to me a humorous intent on the lady's part, but the listeners did not seem to catch it.

Human experience differs widely. My own knowledge of such matters leads me to fancy that there are no possible conditions short of separate prison-cells under which boys and girls will not "connoodle." Certainly, there never was a time in my own boyhood when I did not long to do all a girl's tasks for her,—and put my arm around her waist, while I did them. I did not, then, lay much stress on Miss Beady's comment, that intrigues were almost impossible in the public atmosphere of a large college. Nor did I feel sure, however undesirable the love-making is, that this kind of scholastic mob-law regulation by public opinion might not do more harm than good *upon the whole*.

Miss Beady said, among other things, that the state of culture at American colleges in general was (—what we might easily infer it would be—) something like this,—that the general level of attainment among the students was higher, but that there were fewer instances of very high attainment. Miss Beady did not absolutely affirm that this is a desirable state of things; but I should say the tendency of education in general is now-a-days to produce it, and certainly (indeed, I think this was part of her point) the joint education on a large scale of lads and lasses. But it is not yet proven—though the assumption is constantly made—that it is finally better for progress to have a fair general level of culture with few eminences than to have a lower general level with more eminences. It is not, indeed, proved that we have or ever can have, the means of deciding between the two states of things; or that we can ever be sure of going right by aiming at one result or the other, or, indeed, at any result calculated upon the supposition that the well-being of the greatest number is ours to do as we please with.

However, I am just now merely a reporter, taking pen in hand to say that it was pleasant to see and listen to Miss Beady. Those who wish to know more about the lecture may turn to an *Examiner* of some date in last May (my copy of that particular number is at a distance), which gives an admirable summary. My sole object now is to communicate a little of the pleasure I myself received, and not to express opinions.

A. HUNTER.

CALDERON'S SACRED DRAMAS.*

THE PURGATORY OF S. PATRICK.

THE religious plays of Calderon occupy a middle place between his "Autos," or dramatized sacred allegories, and his secular theatre. They resemble this last in their treatment of their subject, though that subject itself is nearly allied to the theme of the first named. That is to say that in his sacred drama (properly so called) Calderon pursues the same religious purpose as in his "Autos," but by more ordinary and by more worldly means. He does not call us in it to breathe that atmosphere of faith and love, untroubled by the mists of earth, which surrounds us in the "Autos." He bids us gaze up to heaven, but he places near us many objects which draw our glances downwards—at least, till the play is nearly ended. *One* great thought rules the "Auto" of Calderon from its opening until its close; *many* strive with it for the pre-eminence in his sacred drama. The heroes and heroines of his plays of this class remind us much of their counterparts in his other works, whereas the personages of the "Autos" are abstract types—Grace and the Virtues revealed in bodily shape to the admiring gaze, representations of suffering Human Nature and of her great Deliverer. In the "Auto" the buffoon (*gracioso*) intrudes now and then, but suitably apparelled as *Free-Will* gone astray, or as *Innocence* perverted into *Malice*. But he disports himself as fearlessly in the religious as in the secular drama of Calderon; making jokes and telling funny stories just before a martyrdom or a celestial vision, as freely as does his brother clown amidst assignations and duels. So that while the "Auto" raises us at once to stand with Dante and his two poet-friends on the blissful summit of the Purgatorial Mount,

"Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly;"

in the sacred drama we are yet labouring up the hill-side to reach it, as Dante and Virgil did, with the sins and sorrows of earth still echoing round us. Thus even Calderon's religious plays stand related to his "Autos" somewhat as do the third and fourth books of the "Faëry Queen" to the first and second, or as does the "Gerusalemme

* 1. *Las Comedias de Calderon*. 2. *Calderon's Dramas* ("The Wonder-working Magician," "Life is a Dream," "The Purgatory of S. Patrick"), translated by D. F. MacCarthy. London: H. S. King & Co. 3. *Three Dramas of Calderon* (including "Devotion of the Cross"), by D. F. MacCarthy. Dublin: W. B. Kelly, 8, Grafton Street.

Liberata" to the "Divina Commedia." They are more easily understood, but theirs is a less lofty strain of poetry; they can engage the interest of a larger circle, but they make a less frequent and less earnest appeal to our noblest faculties. Yet, on the other hand, they possess the "warmth and colour" which the "Auto," with its "fine severity of perfect light," lacks. And, though some of Calderon's saints are in rather conventional attitudes, and his sinners painted with an unnatural excess of blackness, there is no question that the eye finds relief in looking at their substantial forms after a prolonged gaze at the shifting shadows of metaphysical entities which play before it with perplexing brightness in the "Autos." Nor can we wish for a better specimen of Calderon's fertile and versatile genius, if we must select one class amongst his many different classes of plays, than his sacred drama. There are besides fine tragedies, such as "The Physician of his Honour" and "The Alcalde of Zalamea;" skilfully constructed comedies, like "The Fairy Lady" and "Silence is Best;" imaginative plays;* classic fables dramatized, as "Perseus and Andromeda;" historic pictures both of earliest and latest date, commencing with the mythical "Semiramis," to end with the contemporary "Siege of Breda;" romances placed on the stage, drawn alike from the tales of chivalry which inspired Ariosto and from the primitive pages of Heliodorus. But in nearly each of these varied styles of dramatic composition an Englishman, at least, can scarcely avoid an involuntary comparison with that supreme genius who commended his soul to God at Stratford when Calderon was about to begin his long and prosperous career at Madrid.† "Othello," "Twelfth Night," "The Tempest," "Troilus and Cressida," "Henry the Fourth," "Romeo and Juliet," did they stand alone, were there no "Hamlet," no "Macbeth," no "Lear" in the background, would each outweigh singly Calderon's most numerous and most successful productions of their respective class. The rich, trim garden, with its luscious scents and well-ordered flowers, with the shrubs hiding its boundary wall so well, and the alleys corresponding to one another with such exact symmetry, cannot (according to Trench's good simile) give us the delight of the grand foreground of majestic oaks opening glades up which the fairies sport, with rock and ravine behind them; or of torrent and lake, over which snow-crowned peaks tower, while the blue sea is revealed through wild mountain gorges to give the mind a sense of infinity.

It is only when Calderon stands on sacred ground that he fails to provoke in our minds an involuntary and invidious comparison. His terrible "Absalom" need not fear to be set beside the Old Testament dramas of Racine and Metastasio. His martyr-plays show well by the

* "Life is a Dream," the play especially referred to here, will be found well translated in Mr. MacCarthy's new volume. It is one of its author's best plays.

† Calderon was sixteen the year of Shakespeare's death.

"Polyeucte" of Corneille and the "Virgin Martyr" of Massinger. This ground, for whatever reason, the mightier English genius refused to occupy; or deferred its occupation to those last thirty years of life which he was not destined, like the kindred spirit of Sophocles, to enjoy. Here, then, Calderon presents himself to us as a typical instance of the sacred dramatist of the romantic school. The inheritor of the religious fervour which in mediæval times found rude but vigorous expression in mystery and miracle-play, surviving to our own day among the peasants of the Ammergau, he devotes to its service dramatic powers which (in their own line) have been seldom equalled, at one point never surpassed. Here, fully as much as in his secular plays, we admire that skill in the construction and unfolding of the plot, which Schiller frankly owned would, earlier studied, have saved Goethe and himself from great mistakes. Here is poured forth that wealth of beautiful imagery, that highly poetic view of life is here apparent, which make Calderon's world so much fairer and nobler than that of ordinary mortals. Here, too, in the space of eleven or twelve dramas appears, as in the hundred others, their wonderful writer's vast range of subject. From the days of King David to those of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, from the Cross predicted to the Cross exalted as the penitent's sole refuge, from the martyrdom of Apostle or early Christian to the defeat of the Moors by the hosts of the faithful, he seeks and finds materials to employ to the honour of the Redeemer and of his Virgin Mother. In one of these dramas we plunge into the mysteries of Hades; in another we approach the subject of Faust; in a third we feel ourselves on the brink of an abyss, terrible as that which opened before the unthinking *(Edipus)*. This last, "The Devotion of the Cross," was one of its great author's earliest efforts, and exhibits to the full the defects and merits incident to juvenile performances. It shows another thing also—the degradation of the faith of Spain in the seventeenth century. The Cross, so Scripture tells us, was erected that "we, being dead unto sin, might live unto righteousness." According to the teaching of the popular tale here dramatized, it was set up in order that men might live in sin yet die the death of the righteous, as a reward for certain external acts of a mechanical devotion to its outward symbol.

For this frightful perversion of the most blessed of truths, which justly provoked Coleridge's denunciation of Roman Catholic anti-nomianism, we must hold the age more responsible than the young poet, to whose matured thoughts on such themes this early composition possibly bore no closer relation than did "The Robbers" of Schiller to that great man's later estimate of social and political questions. But though this play stands justly condemned by the common creed of Christians, it is well worth reading on other grounds; and we strongly recommend those to whom the original is inaccessible

to study "The Devotion of the Cross" in Mr. McCarthy's very able version. Few indeed of Calderon's plays impress the mind with an equal sense of power. Who that has read it will forget how gloomy is the cloud of impending fate which hangs over its actors from the first: over the son, an outcast through his father's crime, a crime of which he is himself the destined avenger; over the father, the unwitting instrument of that son's punishment! or how, athwart these shadows of the antique tragedy, shoot milder rays from the Christian's sun; the cross protecting the unworthy children commended to it at their birth-hour by their hapless mother, saving them from the last awful plunge into the gulf of crime, and sheltering them when they repent at last! Scenes like the one in which the wretched Julia stands between her dead brother's corpse and his living murderer (her lover, and also her unknown brother), or that in which the power of the cross puts to flight the robber who had pursued her into her convent asylum, print themselves deeply on the memory. When brother falls by his unknown brother's hand at the foot of the very cross which their father had sought to reddens with their mother's blood, we feel the presence of the ancient Nemesis. When the transgressor, slain in his turn, rises from his neglected and lowly bed in the solitary ravine to receive absolution at the foot of the cross which he died invoking, and ends his life where it first began, pardoned at last and in peace, we confess a more awful yet more consoling presence than Hellenic tragedy ever dreamed of.

Akin in awe-inspiring power to this play, great in spite of its many faults, is Calderon's delineation of the darkest tragedy of David's house, in his "Absalom's Hair." Readers of Trench's charming "Essay on Calderon" will remember his account of the grandest scene of this terrible tragedy; to which, while referring persons previously unacquainted with either, we ought perhaps to add, that this fine scene is a very favourable specimen of the play, which, taken as a whole, scarcely corresponds to the expectations which that scene, singly considered, would excite. Calderon's other drama on an Old Testament subject, "The Sybil of the East," is founded on the legend which made the tree which caused man's fall prove the instrument of man's redemption. Inspired by strange visions, the Queen of Sheba quits her own land to point out to King Solomon the high virtues of the tree which his temple-builders had rejected; and Calderon pours forth his accustomed streams of oriental hyperbole, to celebrate in mystic strains from her lips this first discovery, by anticipation, of the True Cross. Its recovery, in after-ages, is the theme of another of his plays—"The Exaltation of the Cross." To win back that precious relic the Christian emperor, Heraclius, leads an army against the Persian Cosroes; by whom he is defeated, surrounded, and only offered life for himself

and his troops on condition of their apostasy from the Faith. They reject the proposition with noble scorn, and, at their prayer, receive the help of the angelic hosts, by whose aid defeat is turned into victory, and Heraclius returns in triumph, not to either Rome, but to Jerusalem, to place the venerable wood with his own hands in the church of Constantine and Helena.

These two last plays in honour of the cross are, happily, free from the moral perverseness of their more celebrated predecessor; although, like it, they are pervaded by a superstition which insists on confounding the outward symbol of a great truth with the truth which it represents. It is in his plays in honour of the Virgin that Calderon most grieves us: while admiring their child-like simplicity of trust and outpouring of tender and loving devotion, we cannot but feel indignant with the Church whose false teaching turned such rich streams so far from their true channel. Of these dramas, seven in number, only two are generally accessible; though it is believed that the other five exist in manuscript. One of those published, "*Dawn in Copacabana*," is a highly imaginative account of the first conquest of Peru. The gentle natives are credited with the bravery of the Mexicans, and calumniated by being called, like them, sacrificers of human victims. The Spanish valour is exalted at their expense; the Spanish cruelty concealed. The dismay of the Peruvians at the first sight of a ship, and the sound of cannon when the cross is borne to land and planted by an adventurous hand on their coast, leads them to seek an offering for their sun-god. The lot falls on the beautiful priestess, Guacolda, whose lover, the cacique, seeks at first to save her from the fate to which the advancing tide of misfortune forces him shortly to abandon her; complaining, as she prepares to suffer, of the hard lot which dooms her to die for a god of whose love she feels no assurance, and who, as she says, would not die for her. Her humbler lover, Yupanqui, risks his life to save her and is doomed to die with her by the jealous cacique. But Guacolda grasps the cross, already revered by the wild beasts, to the dread of the Peruvians who marvelled at its first erection, and her foes are unable to seize her; perishing themselves shortly after, in the victorious advance of the Spaniards. The third, and final, act of the play opens after the lapse of many years. The Peruvians, enlightened by the Sun of Righteousness, have in great numbers forsaken the worship of the material sun. Guacolda, baptized in the name of the God who did not shrink from death for her sake, is the wife of the faithful Yupanqui. An eye-witness to the miraculous deliverance of Pizarro and his followers when, surrounded on every side by the enraged Peruvians, and, about to perish in the flames, they called on the Virgin, and she (appearing in glory amidst clouds of snow) extinguished the fires and saved them from their enemies, it is Yupanqui's eager ambition to frame her image such as he beheld her then. Night and day the

poor untaught devotee labours at his pious task ; but his failure is humiliating, and the statue, after all his pains, only provokes the derision of the beholders. He tries again with fervent prayer, and, as a last resource, expends all his wealth in having the ill-shaped mass gilded, and so made rich, if not beautiful. A great religious ceremony is to take place next morning, in the presence of the governor of Peru, and the image, if at all worthy of the honour, is to be adopted and borne by a religious confraternity. The malevolent prepare to scoff, the well disposed to pity, as the poor Peruvian lifts the curtain before his workshop. But what a marvel ! Angels have descended in the night, amidst hymns of joy, to retouch the image of the "True Dawn bearing the True Sun ;" and the Madonna and her divine Child dazzle the eyes of the awe-stricken beholders, and enrapture the faithful Yupanqui by his un hoped-for success.

Long as is the interval between the acts of this drama, it is not greater than that which elapses in several of Shakespeare's plays. Far wider chasms are overleapt in Calderon's kindred "*Virgin of the Sanctuary*," each of the acts of which belongs to a different century, and to another order of things than the preceding, with, of course, entirely new personages. But the principal scene of each act is the same—the great Cathedral of Toledo ; and the true heroine of the drama, the connecting link which holds its acts together, is the miraculous image of the Virgin there revered. In each act, too, an interesting epoch of Spanish history is well illustrated ; and we can well believe with what thrilling interest a Spaniard would follow through them the reverses and triumphs of his forefathers—the cross falling before the crescent to arise again and stand resplendent above its waning brightness. The first act belongs to the early Gothic kingdom, and exhibits the faith triumphant over heresy, and the joy of Christian Toledo only disturbed by presage and prophecy of the eclipse of the light which it now enjoys—of the dark days which will have come to Spain when the fair image it reveres shall be hidden.

Those dark days have come when the second act begins. The Moors are at the gates of Toledo. The Archbishop flees the town, walking barefoot, and carrying with him the relics of its numerous saints. He orders the Virgin's image to be carried likewise in the mournful procession, that he may find it a safe refuge among the Christians. But it cannot be lifted ; and in this unexpected hindrance the Toledans thankfully discern the resolution of their protectress to remain and guard her children through their hour of trouble. Before admitting the Moors into the conquered town, the governor hastens with a few faithful friends to hide the image beneath the cathedral pavement. In the gloom of night, with wail and chant of sorrow borrowed from Jeremiah's "*Lamentations*," they mourn the desolation of their Jerusalem, and, as they lower their treasure into the dark cavern, pray that (like Joseph of old), it may

yet be lifted from the pit and exalted to reign and rule. In the third act Toledo is once more in Christian hands. King Alphonso has won it again from the Moors. Few now remember that the Virgin's image once existed ; the knowledge of its hiding-place has died out, and the king has not scrupled, by way of conciliating his new subjects, to leave the old cathedral, now a mosque, in their hands. His wife, Queen Constance, is grieved at her husband's want of zeal ; in his absence she boldly seizes the church and hands it over to the archbishop for Christian uses. The king hears with indignation, from the complaints of the aggrieved Moors, of his wife's aggression, which he resolves to punish, and hastily returns to Toledo. In a striking scene, Constance with dishevelled hair, crucifix in hand, confronts her angry husband before the altar ; bidding him take her life with a dagger which she holds out to him, if on full consideration he deems her worthy of death. Then the distant chant of heavenly choristers draws his attention to the long-forgotten hiding-place of the Virgin. A bright light streams from its inmost recesses, and reveals her glorious beauty to the astonished eyes of the Moor who had been demanding back his mosque from the king, but who now, suddenly converted, implores Christian baptism. The sacred image rises of its own accord from the dark depths which have so long hidden it from view, and is borne in solemn procession, amid hymns and shouts of joy, to its long-vacant place in the restored cathedral.

In spite of the superstition which disfigures the "Virgin of the Sanctuary," it is a very interesting play, chiefly from the power of the patriotic sentiment which it expresses. It makes us wish that Calderon had dealt less with the mythologic and classic personages, whom he transforms in numerous dramas into Spanish cavaliers and señoras, and more with the great men and women of old Castille and Aragon. Even now his noblest hero is, though not a Spaniard, yet a Portuguese. His "Steadfast Prince," though strictly to be reckoned among his historical plays, has nevertheless many claims to be enumerated among Calderon's sacred dramas. That Christian Regulus is not more the flower of chivalry than of saintliness, and wins his place among the noble army of martyrs by the patient endurance of protracted agonies for the sake of the faith.* And his is a true story, undisfigured, till his death, by miraculous appearances or visions. It is impossible, when we compare the holy Ferdinand with his cousin and contemporary Henry the Fifth, to deny that the selfish glory of the victor of Agincourt looks poor in the purer light which encircles the preserver of Ceuta : nor can we help wishing that the mightier genius who, in Prince Hal, bequeathed a fascinating but

* This fine play has been translated by Mr. MacCarthy. An analysis of it, with original versions of some passages, appeared in "Blackwood's Magazine" for May, 1873, in the latter part of an article, entitled "Two Acts of Self-Devotion."

dangerous model to future royal scions, had known and depicted the loftier type of prince which fate reserved to the hand of Calderon.

Each of the sacred dramas which we have hitherto named has, with the exception of "The Devotion of the Cross," an historical basis. It is not so with the five others, which are framed from legendary sources. The four martyr-plays deserve more prolonged attention than we can bestow upon them at the present moment. The remaining drama, the "Purgatory of S. Patrick" (though presenting us in the saint with a true historical character), is yet wholly legendary in its plot and incidents. Like "Cymbeline" and "Lear," it deals with pre-historic Celtic annals, and, like them, it makes small attempt to preserve the manners and customs of its day. Still a poetic instinct has guided Calderon, as in "The Devotion of the Cross," to a suitable scenic background for his tale of wonder; and the mysterious cavern which leads to the under-world opens, with great imaginative fitness, amid the Ossianic mists and sea-girdled rocks of the cloud-wrapt isle which ever listens to the murmur of the melancholy ocean. On several accounts "The Purgatory of S. Patrick" may be regarded as a good specimen of Calderon's sacred drama. As such Mr. MacCarthy has thought it worth the labour of translating twice over. His second version, recently published, is an exact fac-simile of the metres of the original; ranging, as do most of Calderon's plays, from the Italian octave rhyme, through others, to the peculiar rhyme of four and five lines variously combined, which is the especial beauty of the Spanish drama. He has always, also, in every instance where they occur, copied closely the *assonants* of the original, or vowel rhyme (disregarding consonants) unchanged perhaps for several hundred lines. We shall call the reader's attention to such passages when they occur in our citations, as we observe the translator does himself, for alas! they might otherwise easily pass unnoticed; English vowels being so variable in sound that they cannot strike the ear with their uniform effect in the old Spanish ballads, whence they were adopted into the national theatre. Still Mr. MacCarthy has done perfectly right not to omit so peculiar a characteristic of Calderon's plays as this, however little suited to the genius of the English language; and his success is, considering the circumstances, surprising, especially where the assonant vowels are *i* and *e*.

Besides scrupulous adherence to the outward form, the translation before us exhibits the yet greater merit of fidelity to the spirit of its original. Trivial where Calderon is trivial, prosy where he is prosy, extravagant where he is extravagant, but likewise poetic, passionate, and awe-inspiring where his author is so, Mr. MacCarthy's version may be relied on to give the English reader a fair notion of Calderon, alike in his weakness and in his strength. As such, we shall found on it a short account of the play; begging the reader to transport himself in imagination in our company to the Madrid theatre in the

latter half of the seventeenth century, where the audience who have devoutly heard mass in the morning, who have perhaps as devoutly witnessed the burning of a heretic in the afternoon, wait with eager interest in the evening to hear of a foreign country won for Christ by a wonder-working saint, of the flames which they seek to flee, and of the glory which they hope themselves to win.

The curtain rises, to disclose to them the Irish king Egerius, with his two daughters, to whom he is relating a dream which greatly disquiets his mind ; for he has seen them in its course consumed by a flame which issued from the mouth of a young slave, which spared the father to burn the children. They try to divert his mind by pointing out the approach of a ship which bears Philip, the Princess Polonia's lover, to the shore, and which, little as they then suspect it, carries likewise the unknown youth of the king's dream, Patrick, Philip's captive, to the scene of his future triumphs. Then occurs the storm at sea, with which Calderon's audience were so familiar, depicted to them, as here, by a terrified eye-witness, with a liberal expenditure of "ice pyramids, snow-turrets, foam-palaces, and red-coral sepulchres." At last two dripping men struggle to land, and present themselves before the king. They are Patrick the saint and Luis Enius the sinner. Each is called on to give an account of himself, and each obeys. Through hundreds of assonant lines, Patrick first, and, more briefly, Luis at greater length, and with the most unblushing cynicism, depict, the one, the pious life, honoured by Heaven with miracles, which he has led, till the moment when the corsair chief enslaved him, the other, the horrible crimes of every possible shade of blackness, which he, though in name a Christian, has gloried in committing, till, a fellow-captive, he was saved by Patrick from the waters. The king forgives Luis his Christianity, in consideration of his courageous wickedness. He scorns to put Patrick to death, though he has recognized in him the youth of his vision ; but dismisses him with contempt, to keep his sheep for him, while he retains Luis in an honourable position in his court. Patrick quits the man, whose life he has saved, with a little-headed admonition ; but he is more successful in obtaining from him a promise that, whether alive or dead, they shall meet yet once more. He then gladly betakes himself to his lowly task ; and amazes the peasant under whose charge he has been placed, by the fervour of his addresses to his unseen Friend. We subjoin the good version before us of his very beautiful prayer, written by Calderon in the simpler form of the four-line rhyme, referred to above.

PATRICK.

Lord ! how gladly do I live
In this solitary spot,
Where my soul in raptured prayer
May adore Thee, or in trance

See the living countenance
Of Thy prodigies so rare !
Human wisdom, earthly lore,
Solitude reveals and reaches ;
What diviner wisdom teaches
In it, too, I would explore.

PAUL.

Tell me, talking thus apart,
Who it is on whom you call ?

PATRICK.

Great primæval cause of all,
Thou, O Lord, in all things art !
These blue heavens, these crystal skies
Formed of dazzling depths of light,
In which sun, moon, stars unite,
Are they not but draperies
Hung before Thy heavenly land ?—
The discordant elements,
Water, fire, earth, air immense,
Prove they not Thy master-hand ?
Or in dark or brightsome hours,
Praise they not Thy power and might ?
O'er the earth dost Thou not write
In the characters of flowers
Thy great goodness ? And the air,
In reverberating thunder,
Does it not in fear and wonder
Say, O Lord, that Thou art there ?
Are not, too, Thy praises sung
By the fire and water—each
Dowered for this divinest speech,
With tongue the wave, the flame with tongue ?
Here, then, in this lonely place
I, O Lord, may better be,
Since in all things I find Thee.
Thou hast given to me the grace
Of Obedience, Faith, and Fear ;
As a slave, then, let me stay,
Or remove me where I may
Serve Thee truly, if not here.

This prayer is answered. An angel comes to summon Patrick to the great task of converting the Irish nation ; and bears him away to receive a lawful commission for the office. Three years have elapsed when the Second Act begins. Patrick has returned from Rome (where the mediæval legend of course took care to send him), and preached with great success in many parts of Ireland before bending his steps to the scene of his former captivity. He is on his way there now ; and King Egerius awaits his coming in stern and sullen mood. But before they can meet a frightful catastrophe occurs. The wicked Luis has gained the love of one of the king's daughters, who

frees him from the prison where he lay sentenced to death for a fresh offence. She intends to accompany him in his flight ; but he has no mind to be so encumbered. By her death he can at once possess himself of her jewels, and take vengeance on her father, who condemned him, and on her former lover, Philip, a quarrel with whom was the cause of his disgrace. He therefore kills the hapless Polonia in the first wood they reach after safely effecting their escape ; and departs from Ireland to begin a fresh career of crime abroad. Her old lover, Philip, finds the blood-stained corpse, which he thus points out to the father and the sister :*

Seeking traces of Polonia
Through these savage woods distracted
Roamed I restless all the night-time,
Till at length amid the darkness
Half awakened rose the dawn :
Not in veils of gold and amber
Was she dressed ; a robe of mourning
Formed of clouds composed her mantle.

Searching there in every part,
We approached where blood was spattered
On the tender dewy flowers,
And upon the ground some fragments
Of a woman's dress were strewn.
By these signs at once attracted
We went on, till at the foot
Of a great rock overhanging,
In a fragrant tomb of roses
Lay Polonia, dead and stabbed there.
Turn your eyes, and here you see
The young tree of beauty blasted,
Pale and sad the opening flower,
The bright flame abruptly darkened ;
See here loveliness laid prostrate,
See warm life here turned to marble,—
See, alas ! Polonia dead.

The father and sister begin their lamentations, which are interrupted by a voice which calls on Ireland to repent, and in a few moments Patrick stands before them. To conquer the king's incredulity, he prays for a sign from heaven, and at his word the dead maiden rises to her feet, and departs to seek baptism and devote herself henceforth to the service of the true God. But her father remains unconvinced, and in answer to Patrick's declarations concerning Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory, he bids him show him one of them at least, or die in an hour's time.

Patrick once more prays earnestly, and an angel comes down from heaven with this answer :—

* Assonants in *a* and *e*.

Patrick, God has heard thy prayer,
 He has listen'd to thy vows,
 And, as thou hast asked, allows
 Earth's great secrets to lie bare.
 Seek along this island ground
 For a vast and darksome cave,
 Which restrains the lake's dark wave,
 And supports the mountains round ;
 He who dares to go therein,
 Having first contritely told
 All his faults, shall there behold*
 Where the soul is purged from sin.
 He shall see, with mortal eyes,
 Hell itself, where those who die
 In their sins for ever lie
 In the fire that never dies.
 He shall see, in blest fruition,
 Where the happy spirits dwell.
 But of this be sure as well—
 He who without due contrition
 Enters there to idly try
 What the cave may be, doth go
 To his death.

The angel disappears, after promising Patrick an entrance into glory that very day ; and renown on earth, perpetuated by the marvellous cave which is to be known to after-ages by the name of S. Patrick's Purgatory. The saint summons the king and his court, and leads the way to its mouth. Not far from it they meet the penitent Polonia, who adds to the fear which thrills the heart of most on approaching a spot hitherto shunned by universal consent, as she declares how, seeking a lonely hermitage, she had entered the cave, and instantly rushed forth again, affrighted at the shrieks and curses and horrible cries which resounded in its depths. Her description, worked out by Calderon in his more elaborate octaves has, in the third stanza, been thought deserving by Shelley of imitation. It is thus that it commences :—

Here from myself with hurried footsteps flying,
 I dared to tread this wilderness profound,
 Beneath the mountain whose proud top defying
 The pure bright sunbeam is with huge rocks† crowned,
 Hoping that here, as in its dark grave lying,
 Never my sin could on the earth be found,
 And I myself might find a port of peace
 Where all the tempests of the world might cease.
 No polar star had hostile fate decreed me,
 As on my perilous path I dared to stray ;

* This is not an exact version of "*Tendrá el purgatorio en ella*," which implies not merely *beholding*, but *having*, and is a promise of passing through a purgatory in this life.

† "Oaks" would be a preferable version.

So great its pride, no hand presumed to lead me,
 And guide my silent footstep on its way.
 Not yet the aspect of the place has freed me
 From the dread terror, anguish, and dismay,
 Which were awakened by this mountain's gloom,
 And all the hidden wonders of its womb.
 See ye not here this rock some power secureth,
That grasps with awful toil the hill-side brown,
And with the very anguish it endureth
Age after age seems slowly coming down.
 Suspended there with effort, it obscureth
 A mighty cave beneath, which it doth crown !—
 An open mouth the horrid cavern shapes,
Wherewith the melancholy mountain gapes.

And so on through four more stanzas : the eighth is spoken by Patrick himself, declaring that the mysterious cavern contains life for the believing penitent, who shall there be cleansed even in this world from the stain of sin ; but death to the impenitent. The king defies the warning, and rushes rashly into its recesses, whence he emerges no more to sight ; whilst rising flames and awful voices from below warn the survivors not to imitate his impious daring.

During the interval between the Second and the Third and final Act, the conversion of all Ireland is supposed to have taken place. The Princess Lesbia, now a Christian according to the vision, reigns in her father's place ; her elder sister Polonia leading a recluse life in the desert, while her former lover, Philip, is about to become the husband of the new queen. It is at this point that Philip's rival, Luis Enius, re-appears on the scene. He has led an unquiet life abroad ever since Polonia's murder, and returns to Ireland in disguise to endeavour to complete his long list of crimes by the assassination of Philip, vowing revenge against whom he had left the country. As he lurks about in disguise to effect his purpose, he is startled by observing himself watched in turn by a muffled figure, of whom he can only rid himself by a challenge. But his sword cuts the air, and when, throwing himself on the stranger, he penetrates his disguise, it is to find beneath it the awful image of his own future self.

LUIS* (*speaking to the muffled form*).

We are here alone, and may
 Hand to hand resume the combat.
 And since powerless is my sword
 Thee to wound, I throw me on thee
 To know who thou art. Declare,
 Art thou demon, man, or monster ?
 What ! no answer ? Then I thus
 Dare myself to solve the problem,

[*He tears the cloak from the figure, and finds beneath it a skeleton.*]
 And find out. . . . Oh, save me, Heaven !

* Assonants in o and e.

God, what's this I see ? What horrid
Spectacle ! What frightful vision !
What death-threatening fearful portent !
Stiff and stony corse, who art thou,
That of dust and ashes form'd
Now dost live ?

THE FIGURE.

Not know thyself ?
This is thy most faithful portrait :
I, alas !—am—Luis Enina.

[*Disappears.*]

The soldier falls senseless. When he recovers from the first effects of the terrible vision, he hastens to profess his penitence, and lays aside his guilty purpose. He vows to perform a penance proportioned to the grievousness of his offences ; a voice from* heaven suggests to him S. Patrick's Purgatory, and he resolves to betake himself thither, and keep his long-forgotten promise to the departed saint. On his road he encounters his former victim, Polonia. Believing her dead, he imagines that it is an illusion of his spiritual enemy that he beholds, intended, by reminding him of the worst crime he has committed, to drive him to despair. She, discerning in the way-worn wanderer who asks of her the path to the awful penitential cavern, the features of her own murderer, feels tempted to revenge her injuries ; but conquers her own heart, and speeds him o'er the dark waters with her pardon. The whole scene is striking and beautiful. Between the abyss of guilt, which the sinner has just left, and the gloomy purgatorial depths into which he is about to plunge, the clear light of day falls gently on the green promontory where stands the hermit princess, rejoicing in the better part which she has chosen. Before the entrance of Luis it is thus that her devout thanksgiving ascends to heaven—

POLONIA.

To Thee, O Lord, my spirit climbs,
To Thee from every lonely hill
I burn to sacrifice my will
A thousand and a thousand times.
And such my boundless love to Thee,
I wish each will of mine a living soul could be.

Would that my love I could have shown,
By leaving for Thy sake, instead
Of that poor crown that press'd my head,
Some proud, imperial crown and throne—
Some empire which the sun surveys
Through all its daily course and gilds with constant rays.

* " Bless me, Heaven !" the exclamation of Luis as the sound strikes his ear, is a vulgar rendering for " Help me, Heaven !" and should be corrected here and elsewhere.

This lowly grot, 'neath rocks uphurled,
 In which I dwell, though poor and small,
 A spur of that stupendous wall,
 The eighth great wonder of the world,
 Doth in its little space excel
 The grandest palace where a king doth dwell.

Far better on some natural lawn
 To see the morn its gems bestrew,
 Or watch it weeping pearls of dew
 Within the white arms of the dawn ;
 Or view, before the sun, the stars
 Drive o'er the brightening plain their swiftly fading cars ;

Far better in the mighty main,
 As night comes on and clouds grow grey,
 To see the golden coach of day
 Drive down amid the waves of Spain ;
 (But be it dark, or be it bright,
 O Lord ! I praise Thy name by day and night ;)

Than to endure the inner strife,
 The specious glare, but real weight
 Of pomp, and power, and pride, and state,
 And all the vanities of life ;
 How would we shudder could we deem
 That life itself, in truth, is but a fleeting dream !

When the pilgrim has crossed the lake alone in the boat provided for the purpose, he is received on the opposite shore by the canons who watch the mysterious cave. They advise delay ; but he insists on at once entering it, exclaiming,—*

It was God that touched my soul,
 And inspired me to come here ;
 Not a vain desire to know,
 Not ambition to find out
 Secrets God, perchance, withholds.
 Do not baffle this intention,
 For the call is Heaven's alone.

I will ever have my hope
 Firmly fixed upon the Lord,
 At whose holy name even hell
 Is subdued.

FIRST CANON.

The fervid glow
 Of your words compels me now
 To unlock the awful doors.

He does so ; and, with protestations of his faith and his repentance, the intrepid Luis departs into the gloomy cavern, followed by the prayers and benedictions of the admiring monks. The principal

* Single assonant, o.

surviving personages of the drama are grouped around its portals on the morning of his expected return. The Prior and his attendants throw them wide open, and a pallid and scared face emerges from the darkness. At the Prior's command Luis Enius, for he it is, recites the marvels through which he has passed, in the audience of the astonished assembly. He tells how, shortly after his entrance, he found himself in a hall of jasper, in the presence of twelve men dressed all alike in snow-white unspotted, the foremost of whom gave him this weighty admonition :—

“Remember *

That in God you place your faith ;
And that you be not dejected
In your battle with the demons ;
For if moved by what they threaten,
Or may promise, you turn back,
You will have to dwell for ever
In the lowest depths of hell.”

Directly after this seasonable counsel the soldier's trial began. Dark forms from the abyss closed round him, evil whispers assailed him, bidding him despair of God's mercy, and go back to enjoy what remained to him of life rather than seek hell before his time. When he withstood the sinful suggestion, demon hands seized and bound him, plunged him into flames, carried him to regions of perpetual ice, set him amidst fiery vipers and torrents of burning pitch, cast him into a volcano, up and down which flames unceasingly bore souls like sparks, and finally set him to cross a fiery river on a bridge of a single line's width, falling off which wretched creatures were perpetually being torn by the hydras and monsters below. Delivered from each former peril by invoking the name of Jesus, he called on God once more, and passed the fearful bridge in safety.

Yes, I passed, and in a wood,
So delightful and so fertile,
Found me, that in it I could,
After what had passed, refresh me.
On my way as I advanced,
Cedars, palms, their boughs extended,
Trees of paradise indeed,
As I may with strictness term them ;
All the ground being covered over
With the rose and pink together
Formed a carpet, in whose hues
White and green and red were blended.
There the amorous song-birds sang
Tenderly their sweet distresses,
Keeping, with the thousand fountains
Of the streams, due time and measure.
Then upon my vision broke
A great city, proud and splendid,
Which had even the sun itself

* Assonants *e* and *e*.

For its towers' and turrets' endings ;
 All the gates were of pure gold,
 Into which had been inserted
 Exquisitely, diamonds, rubies,
 Topaz, chrysolite, and emerald.
 Ere I reached the gates they opened,
 And the saints in long procession
 Solemnly advanced to meet me,—
 Men and women, youths and elders,
 Boys and girls and children came,
 All so joyful and contented.
 Then the seraphim and angels,
 In a thousand choirs advancing,
 To their golden instruments
 Sang the symphonies of heaven ;
 After them at last approached
 The most glorious and resplendent
 Patrick, the great patriarch,
 Who his gratulations telling,
 That I had fulfilled my word
 Ere I died, as he expected,
 He embraced me ; all displaying
 Joy and gladness in my welfare.
 Thus encouraged he dismissed me,
 Telling me, no mortal ever,
 While in life, that glorious city
 Of the saints could hope to enter ;
 That once more unto the world
 I should go, my days to end there.

And since I from so much danger
 Have escaped, oh ! deign to let me,
 Pious fathers, here remain
 Till my life is happily ended.

The "Purgatory of S. Patrick" is rather a proof of Calderon's skill and boldness in the use of ready-prepared material than of his inventive genius. Montalvan had translated into Spanish Messingham's account of the mediæval legend, derived from Joscelin's life of the saint ; and also the marvellous tale of his cave, chronicled among others by Matthew Paris. The story of the adventures there of Owain, a penitent soldier of King Stephen (Oënus in the Latin chronicle, whence the Enio of Montalvan and of Calderon), is one of the large class of precursors to the Divine Comedy of Dante, which show alike the luxuriance and the sombre character of the imagination of the middle ages. But by boldly transporting the "Miles quidam Oënus nomine, qui multis annis sub rege Stephano militaverat," of Matthew Paris back to the earlier days of S. Patrick, and by making him not only a contemporary but a chance-companion of the saint, Calderon gained at once a foil whose transcendent wickedness might make his comrade's holiness look brighter still, and at the same time as great an approach to unity of interest and design as was possible from the nature of his

subject. For unity of time and place, he ever cherished Shakespeare's disregard. And, at first, we might think that unity of design fared no better than the other two unities in "The Purgatory of S. Patrick." For, as the preceding sketch has shown, the saintly hero of the play, and his tyrant opponent, alike disappear from its list of personages at the end of the second of its three Acts; leaving only, out of the characters who have engaged much of our attention, the villain of the piece and his victim, the resuscitated princess, to fill the last third of the drama. And yet, in spite of this, the central thought of the play, good overcoming evil, incorporated in Patrick's person, manifests itself from its commencement to its close, and links both firmly together. The larger but less distinctly traced picture of the conversion of a lawless island, is repeated for us as it were in smaller and clearer outline in the conversion of one lawless man to Christ: both due to the same saint, in the former case through visible activity, in the latter by invisible influence. Each is subdued by the thought of the great Hereafter, brought tangibly and sensibly before each; the striking scene which results in the repentance of Luis Enius being Calderon's own invention. So, too, is the happy device of making the restored Polonia guide her former lover and betrayer to the haven where alone he can find peace after all his crimes: she floats before us in the last Act as a being of another and a purer world than this—a risen saint who has left behind her all memories of wrong and every fear of evil. And as the hermit princess of the third Act keeps fresh in our minds both the sinner who slew and the saint who brought her to life again in the preceding, so is the concluding portion joined to the earlier of the play by the memory which pervades it of the old pledge given by Luis Enius to Patrick to meet him yet once more. Both the larger and the smaller interest which unite in this drama are satisfied when that pledge is fulfilled, and when the penitent reappears to narrate this meeting with the saint amid the glories of paradise. And that narration itself, undramatic and inartistic in its length, has yet an air of simplicity and truthfulness which compensates for all defects. Not as when the great philosopher of Athens told his tale of the life to come on another's credit, or as the courtly poet sang of it to Augustus and his friends as a reminiscence of Homer; here a plain man's rude, untutored lips declare things veritably seen and heard by himself; and in the strong realism of the old legend versified by Calderon, we for a moment, like his Spanish audience, lose all sense of time and place. Man's earthly joys and sorrows, his arts and arms, his loves and hatreds, shrink into small dimensions in our eyes; and we seem to stand on a rocky islet amid the dark lake's waters, with the distant roar of the Atlantic in our ears, waiting to see the mists part and disclose to us the form of the eye-witness to the things which are eternal.

The poet who attains objects such as these is great, whether he works by received rules, or dares, in the language of the most artificial of poets, to

“Snatch a grace beyond the reach of art.”

Speaking more exactly, the art to which we owe “*The Purgatory of S. Patrick*” is art of the highest order; for it is that which causes its own presence to be unobserved. Amid its seeming carelessness rules an exact plan: nothing is left to chance; everything is provided for, and the most minute circumstance of the play contributes to its grand and solemn result. As in the other dramas of Calderon for the most part, the characters do not print themselves very deeply on our memory; we do not cherish Polonia as we do Imogen; the personality of Luis Enius does not impress us like that of even Shakespeare’s more ordinary soldiers of fortune; Patrick has little individual about him, and might stand equally well for almost any other saint of the calendar. But the whole effect of their history is very different from that produced by any one character taken singly: the great issues involved in it lend a dignity to conventional and ordinary forms which shine in its poetic atmosphere with a lustre not their own, and present us with the blended graces of narrative and dramatic verse.

To-day we must not wander further in the vast and stately pile which Calderon began in youth (side by side with his yet larger secular erection) to devote to religious purposes, and which he spent his age in completing; which, too, he doubtless thought of with humble gratitude on that dying bed whereon, as his epitaph tells us, he despised his other and highly applauded performances. We have not indeed entered the four side-chapels of its choir, each of which is inscribed with the name of a holy martyr. Still less have we penetrated that majestic choir itself, where the noble arches and “fretted vault” ceaselessly reverberate the mystic music of the Auto. But we have admired the Old Testament decorations of the porch; we have paused before the rood-loft, and marked its skilfully contrived approach, we have surveyed for a few moments the ladye-chapel. Yet to-day we have lingered longest in the cloisters where we have examined frescoes like those of Orcagna and Fra Angelico in the Campo Santo of Pisa; in better preservation happily than theirs, but, like theirs, devoted to the representation of the four last things—Death, Judgment, Hell, and Heaven. We turn away with a sigh, though while we looked at the quaint pictures we could not always refrain from smiling. A true faith inspired them, if on some points unenlightened. Where shall we find as firm a conviction now of the reality of things unseen? And so we go forth to mingle once again with the common throng of men; the last faint notes of the chant die away upon our ear, and the rolling wave of sound from the organ is lost to us in the bustle of the busy market-place.

E. J. HASELL.

"CHIROMANCY."

IN attempting to place before the public in a succinct and intelligible form the principles of a forgotten science, and, if possible, to revive an interest in it, or, at the least, to induce a critical investigation of its pretensions, I hope I shall not be deemed pedantic if, for the sake of clearness, I venture to divide this article, short as it is, into a series of paragraphs, each with an appropriate heading. And these must, of necessity, commence with a few words on

THE UNSCIENTIFIC ATTITUDE OF SCIENTIFIC MINDS.

There can be no doubt that for a long period in the history of the world science was most unjustly and unmercifully snubbed. At the present day the tables are turned, and she seems to be exacting a not unnatural revenge. For many years past she has set up a bed of Procrustes on the highway of human thought, and has insisted that every idea, new or old, shall be stretched or curtailed upon it. In other words, everything, not merely in the sphere of physical phenomena, but in the sphere of religion or morals also, must submit itself to her tests, and be pronounced wise or foolish, as it agrees or not with her principles. Unfortunately, however, this attitude of scientific men is essentially unscientific. It is as unscientific to gauge the credibility of moral phenomena by physical tests as it would be to attempt to demonstrate physical phenomena by arguments drawn from the region of moral speculation.

An excellent example of this scientific confusion of ideas is afforded by the attitude assumed by the scientific world, so called, towards the phenomena of spiritualism. *Ex hypothesi* these phenomena are producible only under certain circumstances of darkness and sympathy. But, because they are not producible in broad daylight and in the midst of an unbelieving crowd, they are, forsooth, mere impudent impostures. Suppose we were to apply the converse of this to the man of science, and require him to perform some delicate physical experiment in the blackest darkness. He would probably fail, and would, if treated as illogically as he treats others, be expelled society as an impudent charlatan.

Or to take another example, let us imagine that, at some former time when the phenomena of electricity were but little known, some one discovers the startling fact that sparks are emitted from the back of the domestic cat, when smartly rubbed on a frosty night. He flies with the momentous intelligence to the *sawan* of the period. The latter, not having made the discovery himself, receives it with

marked coldness. "Exhibit the phenomenon to me on the spot," he says, "and I will believe it." "But, my dear Dr. Wetblanket, it is only visible at night, and this is broad daylight." "Sir, a thing which is only visible at night is beneath scientific investigation." Does this sound wise or foolish? Whichever it be, it is the attitude assumed now-a-days by men of science towards spiritualists and other night-poachers in the preserves of knowledge.

Anything more inconsistent with the fundamental principles which science lays down in respect of all investigation cannot easily be conceived. It is the chief boast of science that she is experimental and inductive—that she does not endeavour to distort facts to harmonize with a theory, but patiently evolves a theory from honest observation of facts. She, then, least of all, has the right to reject facts or alleged facts at the outset—to condemn *a priori*—to insist that all experiments shall be conducted in her own way, and not in the way which her opponents deem most favourable to success.

One of the latest instances of this unscientific attitude of science may be found in the January number of the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*. Most people have heard of the so-called "ecstatic," Louise Latour, of whom it is alleged that, during or after certain cataleptic attacks, she exhibits *stigmata* similar to those on the hands and feet and side of the crucified Saviour. Now this, of course, is an appearance not necessarily miraculous, but still so abnormal that no man can be required to believe in its truth, except upon sufficient evidence. Such would be the mental attitude of a prudent and reasonable man. But such an attitude of mental receptivity and patient investigation finds least favour exactly in those quarters where it would be most becoming. The fact is, that science, whilst varying its formulæ, has never changed its narrow-mindedness. Though professedly one of its chief occupations has ever been to make discoveries, it has invariably snubbed discoveries when first made. And so in the case before us. In the present state of medical knowledge, no sufficient natural explanation can be offered of the above-mentioned *stigmata*. The logical lesson to be learnt from this is—study them more closely, and endeavour to get at their explanation. The scientific conclusion actually drawn is—We can't explain them, *ergo* they are all humbug! I venture to say that this conclusion will satisfy those alone who have never studied the history of science, and who are therefore not aware that every addition to our knowledge has been made in the teeth of scientific opposition.

EVILS OF THIS MENTAL ATTITUDE.

I have thus dwelt upon the unscientific attitude of scientific minds, because I cannot doubt that the world has in consequence lost an invaluable amount of treasure, new and old. To my mind

it is time that the scientific should give place to the logical attitude. All men should take as their first principle of investigation the logical axiom that nothing is impossible but what is contradictory. It is, for instance, impossible that a swan can be both entirely black and entirely white at the same time ; but it is not impossible that a red swan should exist, although one has never yet been seen. And, therefore, whilst granting that Chiromancy is not without certain theoretic difficulties, I must emphatically protest against its condemnation *a priori*.

THEORETIC DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF CHIROMANCY.

To understand the principal theoretic difficulties which lie in the path of Chiromancy, it will be necessary to define that science. It is, then, the science of deciphering events, past, present, and to come, from the lines of the human hand. But exclaims an objector, "How can these lines be the signs of fate, seeing that they are most patently the result of the various motions of the hand itself?" Very scientific and very narrow! The logical mind sees far wider and deeper. It knows that nothing on the earth exists in and for itself ; that all creation is knit together in the bonds of vital union. True, the *proximate* cause of these lines is the various motions of the hand ; but what gave your hand these particular varieties of motion? Is it not as easy, and much more natural, for fate to guide the motions of your hand so that its lines shall, rightly interpreted, exactly represent your career, as it would be to stamp these lines in an arbitrary position on your chest, as men impress the image of a cow on butter? And yet, were the latter done, men of science would have an objection the less to urge.

Again it may be said—"It is pretended that there exists between these lines and the planets a mysterious connection and interdependence. But if their interpretation depends on a knowledge of the planets, it is manifest that men in former days have been incorrect ; for certain planets—for example, the Asteroids—were then altogether unknown." And no doubt there is some force in this objection. But, on the other hand, it must be remembered that the influence of the planets is in proportion to their size and their proximity to the earth, so that any errors which might result from ignorance of those more recently discovered, which are comparatively very small, would be but trivial. And the impartial mind will recognise in the acknowledged fact, that such errors have in former times been committed even by the most experienced chiromantists, a remarkable undesigned testimony to the truth of the science itself.

A PRIORI ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF CHIROMANCY.

And now a few words as to certain *a priori* reasons for a belief in

this science. And first, does it not seem much more natural and likely that a man should bear on himself the marks of his career than not? Does he not by common consent thus bear the marks of age and sorrow? Nay, more, cannot a wise doctor predict with tolerable certainty, from the appearance of a child, whether he will be long or short lived? Do not men in this way bear the marks of at least a portion of their fate? And if this be so—if so much may be discovered without any special study of the subject,—may we not reasonably expect that many more such indications will yield themselves to the patient seeker after truth?

Once more: let us regard the lines themselves. As we do so, does not the doctrine of final causes irresistibly suggest itself? Whereto this tangled mesh of intersecting lines? What is the *οὐ ζῆνα*? Nature, as the great Stagyrice teaches, does nothing in vain. It is idle, in this connection, to aver that these lines are caused by the motions of the hand. We are not asking what causes them; we are asking whereto they serve.

I ought perhaps here to mention that, in the opinion of many able commentators, a reference to this science may be found in the Scriptures. At least one text in the Bible seems to refer to it. I mean that remarkable verse in the 37th chapter of Job: "He sealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work." How literal a translation of the Hebrew this may be, I do not know; but that given by the Vulgate is still more remarkable—"In manum omnium hominum Deus signa posuit,* ut noverint singuli opera sua?" How explain this except by a reference to Chiromancy?

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE SCIENCE.

Within the limits of a single article it is, of course, impossible to do more than give the most general outlines of the science. And first, it is a rule in Chiromancy to choose for investigation the hand on which the lines are most clearly marked. Some authorities, it is true, are inclined to think that all that concerns the inmost nature of the man, such as the duration of his life, the state of his health, and the nature of his character, may be most clearly deciphered on the right hand, whilst those things which are external to him, such as riches, honours, adventures, and so forth, find their clearest expression on the left. But this rule of interpretation, if it exists at all, must be taken with so many limitations that, like some rules of that more arbitrary science, grammar, it will be found, in practice, more convenient to ignore it altogether. On the other hand, it is an axiom in Chiromancy, which must never be neglected by those who would attain to proficiency in the science, that the fainter lines commemorate the past, whilst the clearer prestage the future.

* In some editions of the Vulgate, *signa posuit* is reduced to *signat*.

OF THE PRINCIPAL LINES OF THE HAND.

The position of the principal lines on the hand will be best understood from the annexed diagram. These are, in number, five (or, according to some authorities, who add that of the wrist, six), namely, the Vital, the Natural, the Mensal, the Saturnian, and the Hepatarian. If these are broad, well-formed, and clearly marked, it is a sign, according to Aristotle, of magnanimity and longevity; to which he adds that a fleshy hand is equally significant of long life, but unattended with virtue and prudence. Aristotle's acquaintance with the science would seem, however, to have been too superficial to entitle his opinion to much weight.

In addition to these principal lines, the hand presents an infinity of smaller ones, all of which have a specific signification. Of those smaller lines, perhaps, the most important is the so-called *Cingulus Veneris*, which, when strongly marked, is considered to connote an undue tendency to philandering.

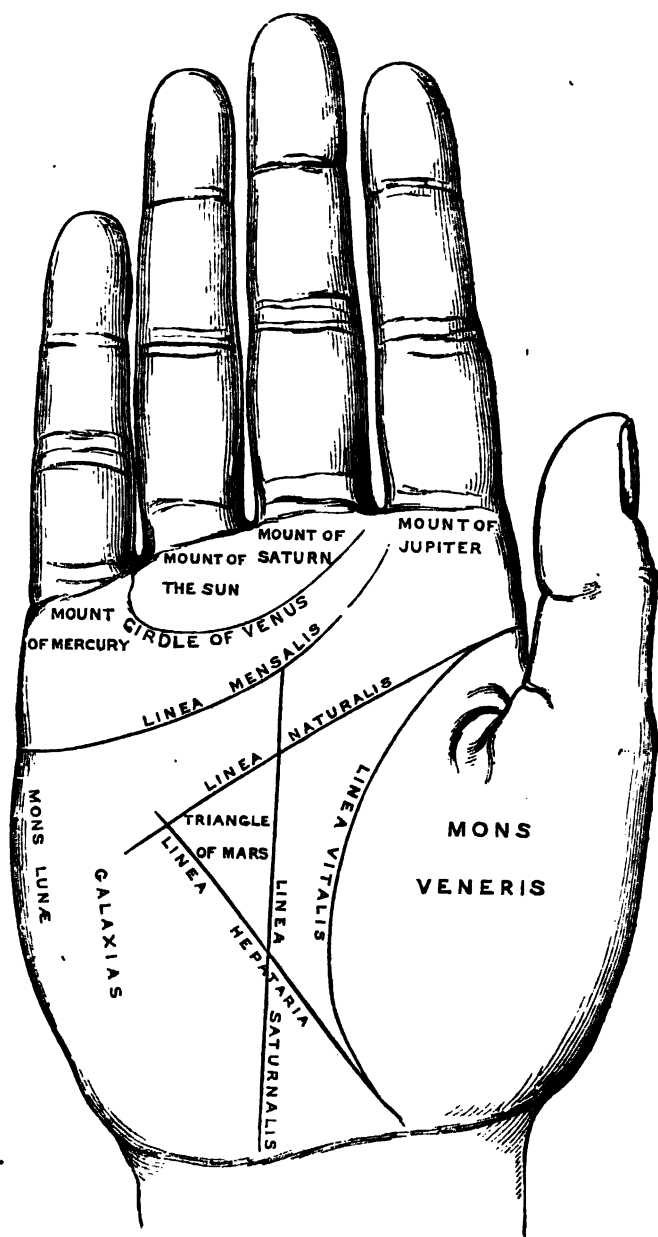
And now to examine the principal lines a little more in detail.

THE LINEA VITALIS.


The *Linea Vitalis*, or Line of Life, begins between the thumb and forefinger, and, describing a kind of semicircle round the base of the thumb, terminates either at the wrist or at some short distance from it. This line derives its name from the fact that the duration of an individual's life may, with probability, be calculated from it. It is divided by eight imaginary lines, equidistant from each other, into nine parts, each of which parts is taken to represent ten years of life. Having thus, in imagination, divided it, it is easy for the seer to calculate the probable duration of an individual's existence. The first clearly marked solution of continuity, beginning always from the upper part of the hand, denotes the epoch of dissolution, unless this be counterbalanced by the strength and number of the little so-called "sister" lines, which are sometimes found at its side. Thus, if this line be divided within the first half of its course, it is a sign that the individual will not attain middle age; and if this division be found, for instance, in the first third, he will not reach the age of thirty; and so on. A famous doctor, in former days, asserted that he never failed to examine the palms of his patients after death, and always found that the division in their line of life tallied exactly with their age at their decease. It does not seem to have occurred to him that, if he had made this inspection before death, he might have saved himself the trouble of prescribing for them.

Another point to bear in mind in connection with the line of life is that all lines crossing it denote dangers more or less formidable, in proportion to the clearness with which the transverse lines are marked.

Wounds are indicated by lines springing from it and passing



through or into the Triangle of Mars. If it ramifies to the base, this is a sign that the individual will make as many journeys as there are ramifications. It is said to be a fact that, whereas in former times the Line of Life was but seldom thus figured, but pursued the even tenor of an unbifurcated progress, it is now almost invariably as ragged and unravelled as the end of a rope of hair. If this be true, it is really a remarkable evidence of the way in which nature adjusts her indications to the exigencies of human development.

It is impossible, within the limits of this article, to give a tithe of the indications of disease, and other calamities, which the Line of Life affords to the view of the seer. One figure, however, which is sometimes to be found on it is sufficiently simple and significant to deserve a passing mention. A circle, cut diagonally by two curved lines, thus,  portends the loss of an eye; and even the most incredulous will hardly dispute that, in this case at least, nature has made use of a hieroglyphic which symbolizes with admirable exactitude the calamity it portends.

THE LINEA MENSALIS.

The *Linea Mensalis*, or Mensal Line, is said to be so called "by reason of its connection with the brain, the seat of reason"—an explanation which would seem to show that the fathers of Chiromancy were better versed in their own science than in that of etymology. Some authorities, however, with greater probability, maintain that it is derived from the Latin word, *mensa*, a table, because the part marked by this line is that on which one rests the hand when leaning on a table. But it will be obvious to the impartial thinker that the derivation of the word is of comparatively trifling importance. As Aristotle admirably observes in his *Ethics*, there are many cases in which the wise man will be contented with the fact, nor seek too curiously to understand the reason. And that which really concerns us now is the use and significance of this Mensal Line.

And, first, its beauty consists in the number and variety of its ramifications. If it is finely developed, broad, and uninterrupted, it promises joy, contentment, and prosperous management of affairs; whilst, if it is double and disconnected, it is an indication of that meddlesome disposition which is always ready to undertake, but often falls short in execution.

Moreover this line is that which, above all others, concerns the scientific, literary, and artistic world, since it has long been laid down as a canon that no one can attain any excellence in either of these three pursuits whose Mensal Line is destitute of branches. Nay, more, that the exact number of sciences of which an individual is capable is clearly indicated by the number of its ramifications. This being so, it seems almost inconceivable that any man of science should have the ingratitude and inconsistency to write against a science, the

truth of which is actually attested by the lines on the very hand which is thus impiously employed in reviling its pretensions.

THE LINEA HEPATARIA.

The *Linea Hepataria*, or Liver-Line, is so called, because, in a mysterious way, it is *en rapport* with the liver, and, by consequence, receives the latest intelligence respecting the health and temperament of the individual. It is, however, on the whole, a vulgar line on which, beyond certain indications of health or disease, nothing special is to be read. One of these is simple and infallible enough. When the Liver-Line is very long and, traversing the Natural and the Mensal, terminates in the *Mons Saturni*, it is a sign of consumption.

THE LINEA SATURNALIS.

Still less important in its indications is the *Linea Saturnalis*. Its chief use and object would seem to be to supply the shortcomings of the Line of Life. But when it is very long, it is a sign of a life of hardship; so that, all things considered, it is desirable that it should terminate between the Natural and the Mensal.

THE LINEA NATURALIS.

Next, however, to the Line of Life, the Line of Nature is beyond all comparison the most important. It is a good sign if it is joined with the Vital between the thumb and forefinger, so to form an acute angle, for this is an infallible indication of intellectuality. When, however, this union does not exist, and in the space between the Vital and the Natural there is the figure of a cross, it is the sign of a most unamiable temperament, exhibiting itself in many cases by dissensions with relations and friends, and, generally, by an infusion of malice into the social concerns of life. Some authorities, it is true, dispute this, and, rejecting the cross as a crucial test, assert that the separation of the Vital and Natural at their sources is a sign of a life of profligacy—a statement which their opponents are not so much interested in gainsaying as in complementing by the remark that profligacy by no means excludes the indulgence of natural malignity.

However this be, there is no doubt that the cross plays a most important part in connection with the Natural. Its existence in any of its numerous forms in the line itself is an undisputed indication of the possession or acquirement of wealth. Little round dots, on the contrary, have an evil signification, threatening nothing less than delirium.

Again, when the Natural is joined at its commencement with the Mensal—a rare occurrence—it is a sign of mental extravagance or folly; but when it is joined for any distance, the consequences are still more dreadful, for in this case it is almost invariably an indica-

tion of impiety. When, however, the Natural is curved away from the Mensal, it is a sign of probity ; whilst, *en revanche*, if it be distorted and prolonged into the *Mons Veneris*, it is an infallible mark of an undisciplined and brutal disposition.

It is in connection with the Natural that a few words respecting the Quadrangle of the Hand are most appropriate. This is that oblong space which lies, or should lie, between the Natural and the Mensal. The more truly oblong this is, the better for the individual ; for it indicates that man of rectitude, whom the ancient philosopher described as "foursquare," and who, in the tenderer parlance of popular modern ethics, is, by an analogous metaphor, usually spoken of as "a regular brick."

It is possible, however, not only that the Natural and Mensal, but also the Natural and Vital should form a quadrangle. And strange to say, when this is the case, the indication is the reverse of propitious. Whether in all instances the result actually follows, which our science would lead us to expect, would be too much to assert in these days of morbid sentimentalism ; but certain it is, that as it is held to portend an ignominious death, so is it beyond all doubt that many persons thus marked have expiated their offences on the scaffold ; and, though the lame Nemesis has sometimes failed to run down her victim before he tumbled into the grave, no reasonable doubt can exist that all persons thus abnormally marked have at least deserved, if they have not always attained, ærial suspension. And it is impossible to regard these two quadrangles, so alike in configuration, and actually contiguous, and yet so diverse in their signification, without being struck by the evidence thus involuntary tendered to the truth of Chiromancy. For, if it were, as its enemies assert, a mere bundle of arbitrary rules, surely similar configurations would, if only in the interests of simplicity and mental economy, have been held to portend similar results ; and yet here we find them, according to their position, portending results as dissimilar as can well be conceived.

Whole treatises might be written respecting this one line alone, but it will suffice for the present to mention one other of its main uses, and that is the information it imparts respecting the day and month of birth. If people are further interested in knowing whether the individual with whom they may be conversing was born by day or night, they have only to study generally the lines of both his hands ; for if those on the right hand are most clearly traced, he takes after his father, and was born by day,—if those on the left, he takes after his mother, and was born by night. To ascertain the month and day, it is necessary to remember that, for chiromantic purposes, there are but seven planets which, between them, preside over the twelve months of the year, and that the hand is mapped out in such a way as to afford a certain amount of territory to each of

these heavenly potentates. These seven will all be found marked in the preceding diagram. They and the months over which they rule are as follows:—

The Moon . . .	over January.	Mercury . . .	{ May, August.
Jupiter . . .	{ February, November.		
Mars . . .	{ March, October.	Saturn . . .	{ June, December.
Venus . . .	{ April, September.	The Sun . . .	July.

Having got thus far, we divide these months into two half-years, the first of which comprises the months February, March, April, May, July, and December; the second, the other six. Now it stands to reason (1) that every one, if born at all, must have been born in one of these half-years; and (2) that if we discover in which of them it was, we reduce the trouble of finding out the month by precisely one-half. Now, happily, nothing in the world is so easy, with a little natural shrewdness and a good deal of experience, as to discover the half-year of an individual's birth; for, if the Natural is well formed, completely marked, and not livid, then there remains no reasonable doubt that the individual in question was born in the first of the half-years as above divided; but if, on comparing the Natural with the other lines, it appears badly formed, pale, and indistinctly traced, then the birth must be sought in one of the other six months. So far the operation is one of amazing simplicity and certitude. Neither is it at all more difficult to proceed to the next step and discover the exact month; for since the Natural in every part of its course is under the domination of some one or other of the planets, and we already know what month or months each is held to govern, we have but to scan the Natural carefully, and noting the first solution of its continuity from the point where it starts between the finger and thumb, observe in the region of which planet it occurs, to know at once the month in which the individual in question was born. But having learned this, we have already learned something more; for, by a beautiful provision of nature which saves the Chiromantist an incalculable amount of trouble, the month very often indicates also the day of the week on which the birth took place. Thus there is always a strong presumption that if a person be born in March or October he will be born on a Tuesday, in May or August on a Wednesday, in February or November on a Thursday, in April or September on a Friday, in June or December on a Saturday, in January on a Monday, in July on a Sunday. Of course it is not meant to imply from this that an individual cannot be born on any other day than the one specified as belonging to each particular month, which would be a palpable absurdity, but merely that there is a presumption in favour of this day as against any other; and it certainly is a matter which, in the

opinion of those not unfitted to form a judgment, might profitably occupy the attention of the Registrar-General, whether the majority of births in each month do not occur on the days specified.

An instance of this method of discovering the month of an individual's birth may not be without a practical value. Thus: A has the Natural, compared with the other lines, faint and livid; he was born therefore in the second half year, i. e., in one of the months January, June, August, September, October, or November. You examine the Natural more closely, and find, for example, that its first clearly marked division occurs near the commencement under the base of the index finger. This is under the domination of Jupiter. Now Jupiter presides over the months of February and November; but February is already excluded as belonging to the first half year, there remains therefore only November,—A. was therefore born in November; and there is further a presumption in favour of his having selected a Thursday in that month for the operation.

PRACTICAL REMARKS IN CONCLUSION.

With this practical exemplification of the value of Chiromancy, it may be as well to draw this paper to a close. Of all people the English are most inclined to judge of the truth of a science by putting it to the test of practical utility; and, judged by this test, Chiromancy must indeed stand high. The history of the world bristles with examples of the service it has rendered. We read in Josephus that Cæsar was so well versed in this science that, when one day a *soi-disant* son of Herod had audience of him, he at once detected the impostor, because his hand was destitute of any marks of royalty. Scoffers may indeed urge that it does not need either the acumen of a Cæsar or the special knowledge of a Chiromantist to distinguish between the hand of an adventurer and that of one born in the purple; but the true votary of science will not allow himself to be discouraged by the cheap scorn of the incredulous; and from the days of Josephus until within comparatively recent times, the science of Chiromancy has been held in the honour it deserves. That the state of affairs should now-a-days be so different induces no doubt regret, but can hardly excite astonishment. For that an age, which has removed all the old landmarks of traditional belief and time-honoured statecraft, should shrink with timidity from any attempt to unveil the future which it is thus preparing for individuals as well as nations is most strictly natural. Chiromancy went out of fashion with the appearance of the modern republican doctrines of liberty, equality, and fraternity, and may be expected to revive in influence as soon as the world shall have seen the error of its ways, and returned to the simplicity of feudal times and the healthy atmosphere of paternal government.

A. EUBULE-EVANS.

MR. CARINGTON.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE THREE-VOLUME NOVEL.

"Tria juncto in una."

THE most distinctive literary production of the present age is, devoid of question, the three-volume novel. Next thereto in point of popular interest comes the science or nescience made easy of certain professors, who announce a new discovery every Monday, which is forgotten by the following Friday. These professors are really not altogether useless; they occupy what are assumed to be minds with what is assumed to be science. If no better for young people, their amazing lectures and theories are assuredly no worse than a theatre which has killed the drama, or a church that prefers folly to faith. In old times of England, as all historians know, there was often war between the Church and the Theatre, each being now and then victor. Now neither seems to have any faith in ideas; there are superb decorations and music at a fashionable church, and shapely legs dancing to music at a fashionable theatre, and the choristers pass from one to the other. A great Dramatist and a great Ecclesiastic are the wants of the age.

Meanwhile the novel does its best to amuse, and sometimes tries to instruct; but the novel has its difficulties. It is an awkward form of literature. Sir Walter would rather have written his worst poem than his best novel: so much space must be given in a novel to incidents undramatic, to descriptions unpicturesque, that the great writer grows tired. The architect has to do bricklayer's work: he dares leave nothing to the imagination of his readers. The sharp crisp rapid action of the drama will not do,—poetry and power are wasted. A story must reach a certain length, and must be worth the circulating-library price merely as a method of killing time. Far be it from me dogmatically to assert that killing time is not the best thing that many people can do, but it is scarcely worthy of a great writer to supply them with a method of doing this thing. This, indeed, has become apparent to some of our foremost novelists; and they appear also to have discovered that they cannot supply tittle-tattle and chit-chat and nice little naughtinesses, as well as their female rivals. So the novel-reading world is just now in the position of a nobleman or gentleman who has decided to dismiss his butler

and groom of the chambers and footman and so forth, and content himself with maid-servants. There is place for them in the modern novel, from the cook to the foolish fat scullion.

Properly conceived and properly handled, I take it that the novel in its present form might be a very fine literary instrument. Unluckily an audience is needed. "An audience!" is the natural exclamation—"why, everybody reads novels." Yes, everybody who is nobody. But, to put a crucial test, would any publisher give a remunerative price for a novel so good that the Archbishop of York could not help reading it? Let any man count the few modern novels he would care to read twice, and they would probably be all failures. Novels are now written for readers who cannot read anything twice. Like children who take their physic in jam, they are unconscious that in every dull impossible story they devour they are reading the same thing over and over again. A perfect yet ideal mirror of life is to such readers unintelligible.

Yet am I sorry for the novel. It might do great things. It reflects in prose the old Greek trilogy of drama. The three volumes, in the hand of an artist, give such fine opportunity for beginning, middle, and end, which are the obvious necessity of all literary conceptions, from a lyric to an epic. It is so good a formula to work upon, that nothing but the public appetite for trash could have prevented the appearance of a great novelist ere this.

That subtle journal, the *Spectator*, some time ago suggested, that the English novel, like the Greek drama, might last about a hundred years and no more. The idea is based on a misapprehension. Drama in Athens was coincident with the glory of Athens . . . brilliant beyond measure, so that the lamp of the Greek mind burns in our households now, but, alas! brief . . . partly by reason of its brilliance. Novel in England is likely to last as long as the English—a race whose even continuous course through triumph, trouble, conquest, defeat, agony, apathy, is without any parallel. One faith is firm in the heart of every Englishman—that the English will go on. I am glad of it. Next to faith in the immortality of your own soul, is faith in the immortality of your own race. Bury me in a trance for as many centuries as you please, and when you resuscitate me there will be Pall Mall the immemorial, and a man on the steps of some club to say,—

"Hullo, old fellow! Where have you been so long?"

This brief digressive essay at the commencement of my third volume is intended for more purposes than one. It is intended to show most clearly that many writers (I deliberately and carefully except myself) would write much better novels, romances, stories, historiettes, *et hoc genus omne*, if only the public would deign to read them. Further, it is designed to punctuate my story to indicate that we have passed the middle of it, and are growing near the real

meaning of it . . . if it have a meaning. Lastly, chiefly, indeed, it is intended to teach young ladies a certain art.

"What?" say you.

The merry girls, with laughing eyes,
Who don't like dry books,
If they are wicked, still are wise
To pick up sly books.

A novel full of joy and fun,
Of thought and glory,
May show the youngsters there is one
Can tell a story.

Some children in this book, I hope,
Will soon be dipping :
This chapter's meant, without a rope,
To teach them skipping.

CHAPTER XXIX.

RACHETTE AND BRAKINSKA.

"Happy the man whose cook is no conspirator."

WHILE the honey-moon of the Prince and Princess Oistravieff was passing from gaiety to gloom, events moved somewhat slowly both at Sarum and at Langton Delamere. Frank Noel waited on the dear old Canon devotedly, ably aided by Laurence the butler, but hindered as much as possible by the Minx. There was a regular war carried on . . . a very civil war of course . . . between this charming young lady and Frank Noel and his trusty ally. She had the best of it; she was in the citadel. Canon Lovelace found her necessary to his existence, and in the fondness of his old heart nicknamed her *Sunshine*. She played her game to perfection: no word ever did she utter against Frank, or against old Laurence, who had known Sarum Close at least as long as the Canon; but she contrived to do for the old gentleman not only what might naturally be expected of her, but also much that might better have been done by his nephew and his butler. She seemed to efface them and render them unnecessary. Canon Lovelace, convalescing, felt perfectly happy under her management: she was without rival as nurse, as secretary, as companion; he found her the best medicine in the world. Frank, seeing as little of his uncle as Miss Wilkinson could manage, very naturally got among his old Salisbury friends, and took life as a young man will who has nothing to do and likes doing it.

At the great hall of Delamere the condition of affairs was so far changed that Mr. Carington had carried his point, and induced the Earl to promise that at the right time he would do the right thing by Elinor . . . as well as by Lucy. To each of these girls he had

duties to perform, the nature of which were known to scarcely any one except himself and Carington . . . certainly quite unknown to the girls themselves. Elinor knew a little, but not all: Lucy knew simply nothing. Elinor had from mere childhood been to some extent under Mr. Carington's kind and wise guardianship, and had grown into a woman of noble type. Poor little Lucy's opportunity of growth had been far feebler: some "seminary for young ladies" had taught her all she knew, save what she knew by instinct. A good girl naturally, but with an instinctive levity about her as of whipt syllabub, she did not compare favourably in well-judging eyes with our Elinor, who looked every inch a lady, and who had a stately touch of the Princess even when her eyes ran over with mirth, and her rose-red lips with song. It is fair to Mr. Carington to say that, though he argued the great case of "*Elinor versus Lucy*," as leading counsel for the plaintiff, with strict logic and strong eloquence, he never for a moment forgot that the poor pretty little defendant was in no degree at fault. It is also fair to the Earl, in this case sole judge, to say that his growing delight in Elinor's loveliness of character did not make him less kind to Lucy. He had made up his mind which he liked best: he had made up his mind what was his duty to each. Mr. Carington had fought for the right, and won; yet the Earl had still a pathetic feeling that Lucy, poor child, was not quite fairly treated. Some wrongs are irreparable. Some children come into the world under conditions so unfair that it seems unfair to punish them for their conduct. Yet the stern and rigorous law of life *will* punish them. The sins of the fathers fall upon the children. What a pity we cannot turn time backwards, make the earth revolve the wrong way, make old people grow young and return to their birthplace, visit upon fathers and mothers, great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers, the sins of our existing generation, which for the most part are hereditary. Fancy an archbishop going back through head-mastership to college life, to boy-life, to the nursery. Some of us would enjoy such reflex movement. Some of us, I sadly fear, are unfit to be babies again.

When the great news of the Princess Paulovna Oistravieff's mysterious death reached Delamere, it amazed more persons than one. Not Mr. Carington, for he knew only too well the deadly anger of a certain person whom here we must not name. The melodramatic method of that death showed the rough hoof of the caitiff-crowned conspirator.

"Vile hound!" thought Mr. Carington. "It is a pity we can't administer English justice to him. One of these days he will run away to England, and all the fools of his neighbourhood will hurrah. The House of Commons, for manifest reasons, will never bring in a bill for the abolition of fools."

Thus having gratified his splenetic vein, our good friend thought he would communicate his news. Seldom did the Earl look at

paper: if Miss Lucy saw anything she thought might amuse him, she had orders to read it out; and Carington, when he came to his apartment, was wont to pick out any fragment of wisdom or of wit, supposing anything of that sort visible. On this occasion Carington took his *Times*, went to the Earl's room, and told him what had happened. Lord Delamere, having heard Mr. Carington's brief statement of the story, read through the journalist's long account, headed, of course,

"THE MYSTERIOUS TRAGEDY

AT

THE RED HOUSE

AT

WANDSWORTH."

"Number One is rather savage," said the Earl.

"Number One is a fool," said Carington. "Once a fool, he will always remain so. Sheer imbecility has made him successful."

"That seldom lasts," remarked Delamere.

"Never," said Carington, emphatically. "One might almost fix the day when that blockhead will come to grief; but he has been crafty enough to make comfortable arrangements for himself beforehand. However, I must make arrangements for the absolute safety of the little Ravioli. If the fellow is getting wild, it shows he is near his end; but he shall not do that child any mischief."

"What a Quixote you are, old fellow," said the Earl, laughing. "It's pleasant to know a man who despises emperors and adores ladies. Number Two is safe here, but can you keep her here?"

"How do you know she is safe here? May not some rascally emissary of his Majesty the Rascal come across your moat and steal her as she sleeps?"

"Faith, Carington, hadn't you better marry her? I pity the man who should come into *your* nuptial chamber with evil designs."

"You flatter me, Delamere. We all grow old. The pretty little wicked rebel Ravioli is far too frivolous a thing to marry. I don't mean to admit her to my bed-chamber, but I want her to be safe in hers."

"What can harm her here?"

"Do you know a conspirator at sight? I am one, my man is one, and the best servant you have in your house is one."

"Who the devil do you mean?"

"Ah, who indeed? Why no less a personage than Rachette. He is Number Seventeen; but he got tired of the villany, and buried himself down here to be out of the way. Although he is your cook, and a devilish good one, he would be a Duke if he dared reappear in France."

"This is a hoax, Carington."

"Not a bit."

"Why should a Duke join conspirators, and turn cook to get out of their way?"

"Why should fools be fools, especially in France? Rachette, who I dare say will give you his noble name if you care to ask him . . . I wouldn't though, for he is better as cook than as Duke . . . has grown disgusted with the state of affairs. He fancied conspiracy might mend it. He soon found his mistake. Then to himself he said, 'Well, I dare not return to France. If I walk about London as the Duc de l'Ivresse (mine ancient title), they will stick a skewer into me. Better that I, who from earliest youth saw the *ars culinorum* in its most poetic light, should stick skewers into the noble pheasant and the royal round. I can cook; I will get a superb testimonial from Tessier, my own old cook in the Faubourg, who is now *chef* at the Marquis of Mirakles. Some lord will give me a thousand a year, and I shall cook myself daily a superb dinner. If they want to assassinate me, they will not look for me in a kitchen.' Thus soliloquized Rachette, my dear Delamere. Now do you see how easily you might have been assassinated?"

"Egad," quoth the Earl, "these be strange sayings. What's to be done? Rachette's a good cook . . ."

"A genius. You need not be afraid of Rachette. I have discovered that he hates and fears Number One with bitter hatred and with bitter fear. He will not poison either you or me; he will not poison the Ravioli. But you see how easily, mysteriously, villanously, conspiracy can find its way into even such a house as Delamere."

"I wish Number One could first be flogged and then hanged," said Delamere. "But what do you propose about the Marchesa, whom you think in danger even here?"

"Let her stay, if you are not tired of her."

"Tired!"

"Well, of such an original creature it would be hard to tire. It is her mad fancy for mad notions that has made her conspire—has placed her high among the Silent Sisterhood. I have in my time done two or three things which I think rather clever, but taking that woman suddenly out of London is assuredly my best achievement. She, a little fool, with no morsel of harm in her, but wanting some sort of excitement, became, through her rank and beauty, a conspirator of the first force. She was the link between Number One and the Silent Sisters. Number Three of that society may guess, but cannot know, who is Number One."

"Let the little conspirator stay," said the Earl. "If I am murdered here in my lonely hall, I'll haunt you, Carington . . . I will, by the eternal gods. No matter; let's see what happens. Go and tell the news to my culinary Duke and the rest of your comrades . . . and if you should meet Lucy, tell her I want her."

"Delamere," said Carington, taking his hand as he left the room, "how much you like that little girl: I delight to see it."

"But" . . . the Earl began.

"But me no 'buts,'" interrupted Mr. Carington. "You have decided to do what is right and what is kind. Your decision is beyond appeal, and is in my opinion absolutely right. We must all pay for the folly of youth; you are paying double or treble what most men pay, because you lived twice or thrice as fast as your friends. Console yourself with Dryden's superb transfiguration of Horace . . .

'Not Heaven itself upon the past hath power;
For what hath been hath been, and I have had my hour.'

If you have not had your hour, Delamere, I should like to know what man has."

"You, Frank," said the Earl. "You have lived more in an hour than most men in a week."

"Well," said Mr. Carington, "we won't discuss this question to its ultimate depths to-day. Three conspirators have I to talk to concerning the needs of the morning. My poor Raffaella will be frightened to death, and Demetrius will want to go and kill somebody; and as to Rachette, he will rush off to Paris at once."

"Then don't tell the Duke before we dine," said Delamere.

Mr. Carington paid his visits in the inverse order of the names he had mentioned. It was Rachette first, Demetrius second, Raffaella last. Rachette, brilliant in his special art as Savarin or Monselet, and thinking (I do not contradict him) that cookery is poetry, rather enjoyed his pleasant safety at Delamere. When Mr. Carington showed him this last bit of news, he laughed at it.

"Los aux dames,
Au Roi los!"

he exclaimed. "I am Rachette, the cook, Mr. Carington, and I am glad to serve a gentleman like the Earl of Delamere. When no longer fools and knaves rule my unhappy country, I may return thither; till then I prefer an English kitchen to a palace of France. As to Number Six, well, I am sorry. She was a foolish girl, so far as I have heard, though wonderfully clever. Doubtless she will be revenged."

"How so, Rachette?" said Mr. Carington.

"All such vile crimes are in due time avenged. You will see."

"I am glad you have that belief," said Carington. "I like to hold it . . . but there are so many prosperous scoundrels, Rachette. You like me to talk to you as if you were born to the kitchen, I know. But why are you here?"

"Because a certain scoundrel is elsewhere. I do not quarrel with my kitchen. Tell me, Mr. Carington, do I not send you up pretty good soups? How did you like those *rognons à l'Impératrice* . . . those *huitres à la Gloire de Paris*? Were they good? Can they produce anything like them in Berlin? To-day you shall have a most exquisite *ragout à la Princesse Russe*."

Wherewith the ducal cook walked off to his culinary duties.

"Well," thought Carington, "I've taken a nice business on hand. Never mind, I must go through with it."

He went to his own room, and rang for Demetrius. He told that stalwart Russian what had happened.

The man stood still, his great eyes open and fixed, his giant limbs trembling, his right hand clenching his left arm so strongly that it was bruised for weeks. For ten minutes he stood speechless. Then he said, with a voice that seemed a preternatural cry . . .

"Dead? My Paulovna!"

"Yes, Demetrius," said Mr. Carington. "It is only too true."

"Then by God in the highest heaven, that man will I slay," said Demetrius Brakinska. "He is already dead."

The Russian left the room and the house, not wildly, but with a stern and resolute step. Mr. Carington has never seen him since. Mr. Carington, who is a good judge, said to himself in an undertone,—

"If Demetrius Brakinska should kill Number One, it will be a gain to the world. I think he will. Now I must go and talk to Raffaella."

CHAPTER XXX.

RAFFAELLA RAVIOLI.

"A mighty genius may exist in Lilliput:
The fiercest power and passion of the universe
May dwell in atoms that defy the microscope.
God is both infinite and infinitesimal."

The Comedy of Dreams.

ELINOR and the Marchesa soon became great friends. Elinor, wholly ignorant of conspiracies, regarding politics, indeed, as just the same sort of absurdity as mathematics or chemistry, feeling in her own mind the conviction that a girl's best education consists in love and poetry, petted the little Marchesa with no idea in the world that she was bestowing her kindness on a mysterious tigress in lace and silk, whom half the potentates of Europe would gladly decapitate. What Elinor might have thought, if she could have seen the plots within plots mapped upon Raffaella's small restless brain, it is impossible to say; probably she would have been entirely puzzled thereby. Elinor was deplorably ignorant of all useful knowledge, such as Miss Pinnock would have taught her, had she been the fortunate pupil of that severely seraphic instructress. She did not know who drew whom round the walls of what, and is suspected never to have learnt tare and tret. Had you asked her to find Bencoolen on a map, she would probably have dropt upon Ben Nevis. She never looked at a newspaper; she was quite unaware who was Czar of Russia, or what form of government prevailed in France; but she had a certain amount of knowledge in English literature of the highest class, quite uncommon

with girls of her age. This dreadful ignorance was all Mr. Carington's fault; he had been actually, though not legally, her guardian almost from her birth; he caused her to be educated in a fashion quite unusual.

Elinor, it has been said, petted Raffaella like a child, though that lady might have been her mother if she had married at the early age not unusual in Italy. The Marchesa was amused and pleased. She liked to be in the loving care of this tall bright-eyed rosy English girl. Elinor might have sat to the manliest of sculptors to be carved colossal for some temple of a goddess; Raffaella was only fit for reproduction as a statuette in ivory. But Elinor's spirit was calm and serene in its movement . . . like the silent flight of some large soft-winged bird passing from tree to tree in tranquil summer, while the Ravioli was by nature untameable as the wind, fretful as a wasp, restless as the darting dragon-fly. Yet, somehow, on this occasion Mr. Carington and Elinor seemed to have mesmerised her, even as he who hath the gift may mesmerize one of those swift-flashing dragon-flies till it lies in his palm as motionless as if it were dead.

Two things, it may be noted, tended to keep the Ravioli quiet—one safety, and the other mischief. So long had she been playing her perilous game, that she began to get a little frightened at her own temerity. Raffaella, at twenty-five, had become a conspiratress from sheer fun and daring and gaiety of heart; ten years had taught her many dangerous secrets, had shown her in a thousand ways that any day she might meet her death by a trivial mistake. Raffaella, a charming little widow, whose husband had never given her the least trouble, and had loyally left her more money than she knew how to spend, had year by year grown more aware of the value of life. The career she had commenced as a girl she would gladly have abandoned as a woman. Now she was taking holiday; she was out of the cycle of conspiracy. Who would search for this fair Florentine in Strathclyde, in the home of a great earl, and with such a guardian as Carington the omniscient? She was full of fun about it; running over, like a glass too quickly filled with champagne; longed to chatter of it to Elinor, only Mr. Carington had hitherto forbidden any such confidences, and she was more afraid of him than of anybody . . . even Number One.

On the mischievous view of the matter, how she wished she could chatter to Elinor! She laughed to herself, often and often, and Elinor wondered why. She would lie back on the great velvet sofa by the fire, a little Maltese terrier of a woman, and laugh, laugh, laugh, a peal of merry silver laughter, like some fairy clock that drops its dozen peals of chime suddenly on the ear at midnight or noon, till Elinor could stand it no longer, and would ask why she laughed, and she would reply—

"I must not tell, dear. Ask Mr. Carington."

And then she would go off again to the very same tune, as if she

were a charming clock in petticoats that forgot it had already struck, and therefore repeated its chimes. Elinor, though not inquisitive, could not help wondering what her friend, on most matters only too communicative, had hidden as a laughable mystery. The reference to Mr. Carington, as the only person to solve that mystery, of course piqued her the more.

But who can marvel that Raffaella laughed silently? Wasn't it fun? Here was she, a little woman at the very centre or core of European conspiracy, suddenly carried away and isolated. Such disappearances are not advertised in the *Times*, nor can the detective police be set to investigate them. At the Berkeley Square Hotel it was only known that the Marchesa had left; but a note, posted in London, had informed the manager that she would soon return. This, of course, was Mr. Carington's device; indeed, the Marchesa knew nothing either of that, or of where she was, or of what were the intentions about her. She did not rebel. The thoughts of safety and of mischief made her tolerably content. When she had those gay little laughs that puzzled Elinor, there were visions before her of Number Three calling, day after day, for instructions, and perfectly puzzled what to do . . . and better still, infinitely better, of Number One looking with stolid gloomy face every morning through a grand palace window upon garden terraces of beauty unsurpassable, and sulkily shudderingly wondering why there came no report from Number Two. Well she knew that he was a man who liked not to wait for what he wanted; a man who had passed through infinite perils, and was even now encircled by infinite terrors, though he had an army at his call, and a nation under his foot; a man without scruple, without remorse, without courage, without belief in God. Her sudden vanishing might well drive this man mad. He would drive through the streets of the city in which he dwelt with a fear lest a pistol at some corner might end his life. He would make great speeches in his inherited grand style, feeling all the time like that King Belshazzar whose fright proves that phosphorus must have been discovered at a very early date. Looking naturally at the comic side of life, and viewing it, indeed, as a pretty airy burlesque, that should be set to the gayest and lightest music, the Marchesa really could not restrain her occasional laughs at Number One. She sang and laughed, and twittered and chattered, like some pet bird, whose cage is pleasant, and whose mistress kind.

She puzzled Elinor, who petted her. That briefly is the state of affairs. They lived on very pleasant terms, though neither quite understood the other; Raffaella, in fact, could never have been brought to understand Elinor, though Elinor might, perchance, comprehend the Marchesa.

When Mr. Carington had got through his philosophic colloquy with Rachette, leaving on his palate a pleasant feeling that his dinner that night would be served, as lawyers say, "without prejudice," and

had sent the fiery giant Brakinska away, like an arrow of death, Heaven knows where, he caused himself to be announced to the Marchesa. Elinor had been making tea for her in wonderful cups of egg-shell china, with no handles, of course, and so ridiculously thin that you hardly realised the notion you held anything except the tea itself. The fragrance of the warm weed filled the air; the laughter of the two ladies was the merriest and sweetest of music; and to Mr. Carington it seemed that they made together as pretty a picture as ever any artist-lover of beauty painted.

"Oh, Mr. Carington!" cried Raffaella, springing from her sofa, "now what *do* you want?"

"A cup of that tea Elinor makes so deliciously, and as much poetic gossip as you have to spare. I have an hour on my hands, so, as there is no mischief to be done in this innocent country district, I am reduced to tea and talk."

"I will make you the choicest cup of tea, Mr. Carington," said Elinor, and deftly carried out her promise. "Now, please tell us whether there is any news interesting to ladies. I like being here amazingly, but I begin to wonder whether anything ever will happen. Will it?"

"Something happens every instant," said Mr. Carington, with a smile, sipping his tea with a very satisfied air. He liked his position; liked both women, each in her way; knew the secrets of both, and was amused by them. "This is a whimsical world," he went on; "while I am drinking this delicious cup of tea, something may be occurring a hundred or a thousand miles off that may to me be of enormous importance: it may make me a millionaire or a pauper, a wise man or a maniac."

"I differ from you," said Elinor, laughing gaily. "You are wronging yourself, Mr. Carington."

"How so, young lady? Come, what matter have you for argument?"

"O, I am not going to argue," she said; "but I am not prepared to believe that any event could drive Mr. Carington into a state of lunacy."

"I suppose it would be rather a difficult matter," he replied, not ungrateful for her appreciative little speech, and quite conscious that nothing short of a crushed skull could injure that coolly moving brain of his. Indeed, I think he found it sometimes almost too good a machine. "But now," he went on, "I have something to tell you, my little Raffaella, and I am uncertain whether I shall tell Elinor . . . or send her away while I communicate what I have heard. She might be of use if you were to faint, but then she knows nothing about conspiracies."

"O yes, I do, Mr. Carington," says Elinor, indignantly. "You *know* I have read *Julius Cæsar*. Yes, and I have read Ben Jonson's *Catiline*."

"Isn't she delightful?" asked the Marchesa. "I call her *Mamma*

sometimes, she takes so much care of me ; but now and then she gets into these funny childish moods, and then I call her *Baby*. But what is your wonderful news, sir ? Why am I to faint ? *Faint*, indeed ! *Mamma*, is there any *eau-de-cologne* ? ”

Mr. Carington laughed.

“ Did you ever see a conspirator, Elinor ? Would you believe this little woman in white, whom you are so tenderly nursing, to be one of the most dreaded conspirators in Europe. She is, in sober truth. She has upset several monarchs, and caused several great battles. I have imprisoned her here, and made you her unconscious gaoler, to save an empire or two that she was bent upon destroying.”

Elinor looked at him greatly puzzled ; there seemed a strange blend of jest and earnest in his speech . . . even in its tones.

He was holding in his hands a journal which contained the account of the discovery of poor Number Six's body in that hideous old Red House by the Thames. He showed it to the Marchesa, and asked her to read it. As she read her eyes brightened, the colour came into her cheek, her white teeth pressed almost too keenly on her rosy under lip. She showed no sign of fainting.

“ You think HE did that ? ” she said, returning the paper to Mr. Carington.

“ I feel sure.”

“ God will punish him,” she cried, excitedly. “ O what a wicked fool I have been ever to help that vile wretch in his cowardly villainies. Thank you, thank you a thousand times, for bringing me away as you have. Did you think this would frighten me ? Do you think I care for my own safety ? I would go straight to that man this moment, and run into his cowardly heart this dagger.”

As she spoke, this mere infant of a woman amazed Elinor, by pulling up the soft folds of her attire, and snatching from a sheath made to depend on her garters a bright thin blade of steel that would certainly reach the heart of any gentleman who had one. Elinor, ignorant of such strange Italian customs, could scarce believe her eyes as the tiny Marchesa, springing from the sofa, held this fatal weapon glancing in her firm white hand.

Mr. Carington took things coolly enough.

“ Raffaella,” he said, earnestly, “ I am glad to see you are not frightened ; but that you are angry. You will in future take my advice, I hope.”

“ Always, Frank, always.”

“ That villain will come to an evil and disgraceful end, but it must not be by your stiletto, Raffaella. Let me see it.”

She handed it him obediently. He tried the temper of the shining blade with the air of a man who knew steel from iron.

“ Yes,” he said, “ a pretty toy for a lady, and pretty straight you might drive it into that cruel coward, that sordid fool. But you were not meant to do such dirty work, my Raffaella. So dismiss the

idea, and remain quietly here. Elinor, child, you look amazed, if not alarmed. Ask Raffaella to tell you all about it. I give her leave; and keep her here, and make her behave herself, and be her Mamma as before. By Jove, it is an amusing inversion of affairs. Keep her in order, Elinor. She is a mere baby."

"Not too great a baby to use my dagger, Frank, if it became necessary. Often have I longed for the chance."

"Nonsense, Raffaella, be thankful you were never tempted," said Mr. Carington. "Fancy *you* being an assassin. Elinor, don't let this excitable little conspiratress frighten you. She may have her dagger back again; for, having worn it in her stocking so many years, she would walk awkwardly without it. But listen to her story, Elinor, and learn wisdom . . . not that I think anything could teach you to conspire."

"Indeed, no," said Elinor, earnestly.

"O you don't know," exclaimed the Marchesa, "it's such fun."

"Fun to some and death to others," said Mr. Carington, gravely. Then, putting his hand on Raffaella's pretty flighty head, he said, "Remember Paulovna, my child. But have no fear. The telegraph has already said a warning word to Number One . . . in a cypher he knows full well."

CHAPTER XXXI.

EXCHANGE OF CONFIDENCES.

"The fairy Florentine, the English maiden,
With youthful memories laden,
Talking where noisily the forces flow
From northern summits where still shines the snow,
Would charm Boccaccio."

ONE afternoon of gray mist that had settled down all day upon the fells, making it impossible to see even the mere or the noisy river, the Marchesa, who had been sitting a long time silent, abruptly exclaimed to Elinor, whose long white fingers were busy with work that looked like flowered cobwebs as the fire light shone upon it:—

"Really this is amazingly dull—this gloomy weather. I wish we could tell such delicious love stories as those ladies of Boccaccio in the days of the plague at Florence."

She said all this with such rapid energy that her little dog, Tasso, rushed from the hearth to the door—angrily barking at some imaginary foe.

The Marchesa and Elinor both laughed at the little Italian's vivacity, and her dog's echo of it.

"Now look at those grim fells, as they call them here—round-headed monsters that try hard to be mountains and can't succeed: and then think of the pale rose-coloured peaks that shoot into the

sky like spires of light, and die in the opal splendour of the higher air in Italy! What is the use of such an atmosphere as this? Elinor, let us tell stories."

"I never could. The old maiden lady that took charge of me as a child could; she knew thousands; I believe she made them up as she went on. I thought them better than the *Arabian Nights* or your beloved *Decameron*."

"O! this is rapturous!" cried Raffaella, clapping her hands so that Tasso broke into an *ottava rima* of barks at his fancied foe. "Now you shall tell me all about yourself when you were little, and about the old lady and her stories, and who you are, and why you haven't got any name, and everything."

"O! but you must begin," said Elinor. "I have so longed to know some of your adventures, but didn't like to ask; and I am sure you can tell them so delightfully. Now do please."

"Well," answered the Marchesa, musingly: she had sat on a stool opposite the fire, and was poking Tasso with her white-satin-slipped toe . . . "Well, there is no harm, Mr. Carington says."

"O! do go on, Raffaella. It will be so nice, this gloomy day."

"Turf, flowers, trees, birds, white marble gods and goddesses, fountains, long light lofty rooms full of pictures, a pleasant indolent courtly way of life, my invalid mamma always very kind, but too weak to say much to me—this is most of what I remember when a child. Mr. Carington, who had known my dead father, was the strongest figure in the lazy picture. He was always kind and full of fun: he does not seem to me a bit altered these twenty years or more."

"It was a family arrangement that I should marry my cousin Giovanni, son of my father's younger brother. He was the Marchese now, but most of the property was to come to me. Mr. Carington tried to prevent this marriage. He had heard a good deal about Giovanni that he did not tell mamma and me: still, he told her enough to frighten her. But she was ruled by her confessor, Father Spiridion—the most dreadful man I ever knew. O dear! how I used to tremble when I went to confess to him, and he asked me such wicked questions, and made me do such cruel penances! The father had determined I should marry Giovanni: it was a family compact, he said, and to break it would be impious, and the Pope had already granted a dispensation, and we dared not insult the Holy Father. So I was married to Giovanni, who liked me very well as his cousin, and was glad of my money, but who never cared for me as his wife. He had formed a set of low companions, some of each sex, with whom he spent all his time engaged in dissipations I did not understand. He was several years older than me, and when he deigned to come home he treated me just as if I were a child. We never occupied the same apartment. He used to laugh at me as a baby, and to point out some giant peasant-woman that passed the window as the sort of companion he preferred. Father Spiridion tried vainly to

keep him in order: and it was, I think, a relief to everybody—certainly it was to me—when he was stabbed in some mysterious quarrel, and his body thrown into the Arno.”

“What a wretch!” said Elinor. “What a hideous husband to have! Still, he was not your husband, dear Raffaella: and you ought to have married again, indeed you ought.”

“O, I meant to, quite! Mr. Carington has often scolded me for not doing it. I have plenty of money,” Raffaella said: “the palace at Florence is mine: Giovanni’s dissipations were low and cheap, not the princely extravagances of a great noble whose family name is in the Book of Gold. But I went to Paris, and there I met with some mysterious people who talked in whispers of the freedom of Italy, the abolition of the Pope, and lots of other things which were to be done by their secret society. I know now they were told to make my acquaintance by——”

She hesitated.

“By whom?” asked Elinor.

“Ah! that is one thing I dare not tell—I will call him Lucifer—Prince Lucifer let us say, to be reverent.”

Again Tasso barked at her vehement laughter. She was brave enough now to laugh even at that “dreaded name of Demogorgon,”
NUMBER ONE!

“Yes, Prince Lucifer had seen me, I won’t say where; had even spoken to me, being most amiable, so far as a fiend can be amiable; had thought I might be useful. His satellites surrounded me—I like mysteries: I wanted to see the glorious old days of my Italy renewed—days when Venice ruled the sea, and Florence the mind of the world—when the Pope was a Power. I hated modern popery, all weakness and intrigue: hated Father Spiridion, and all the church for his sake: and so I turned conspirator. And then I found I could not marry, or do anything else, except what I was told. Now I have always hated doing what I am told; but I had this compensation, that there were people beneath me who had to obey my orders without daring to ask why. Well, I am not going to tell you any more of my conspiracy, for I am tired and ashamed of it all: but I should still have been going on if Mr. Carington had not suddenly spirited me away one morning in my sleep, and hidden me in this cosy castle.

“And, O! what fun! Prince Lucifer must be in such a dreadful state of fear because he can’t find me. He is the most contemptible coward I ever knew.”

Another occasion arose for Tasso’s inexhaustible chorus.

“You must marry now, Raffaella,” said Elinor. “Young and pretty, and rich, you can choose somebody who will make you happy.”

“O, I’m happy enough: and they would consider me quite an old woman in Italy. No: you are the girl to marry; and Mr. Frank Noel seems to think you so. When is the wedding to be? Come, confess.”

"You are not Father Spiridion," said Elinor. "How can I possibly marry without a name? No clergyman dare solemnize the ceremony."

"We'll give you a name. Come, I'll write and tell Frank that I have adopted you, that you are now Elinor Ravioli, and that he will have to ask my permission before marrying you. That will do delightfully."

Tasso was at it again, drowning the silver chimes of an ornamental clock that just then played some wonderful old air.

"Now, Elinor, your story, please. It will be twice as good as mine, I know."

"Indeed not. It is very quiet. I do not quite know how I lost my mother: she died when I was a baby: papa had gone abroad some time before I was born, and there came news he was drowned at sea, and I suppose the grief killed her. I do not even know what happened next, except that Mr. Carington, who was papa's friend, as he seems to have been almost everybody's, was in some way able to take care of me. He has never told me anything of this part of my life. When I begin to remember anything at all distinctly, it is a quaint old farm-house, not far from Kingsbridge in Devonshire, and also not far from the sea. It was a low irregular house of red bricks, covered with jessamine and ivy, with a great yard in which it was my delight to see the cows milked, and in time to milk them myself . . ."

"O, Elinor, you could never have milked a cow! Why, I would rather be in twenty conspiracies! Didn't they kick?"

"Often: knocked the pail over: knocked me over too. Well, besides there was such a nice square walled garden, two sides covered with magnolia, and one with a great lemon tree under glass like a bookcase, that bore hundreds of such fragrant lemons. There was a little front garden, full of myrtles and old-fashioned flowers, with a wicket gate that led on to a bit of common, and right opposite you was the sea, with rich lovely sands, pleasant to my naked feet when I used to undress in a corner of the rocks in the early summer mornings, and scamper down them to hide myself in the water.

"But this was afterwards. I never could tell a story right on, as you do, Raffaella. Miss Ford kept the farm: I was made to consider her a second cousin of mine: a tall thin active pleasant old lady, whose great bunch of keys jingled and whose black silk rustled through the house perpetually. She was very strict and very kind; insisted on church twice a day of Sundays, with church catechism and collects, epistles and gospels, in between; let me read on other days most delightful old books in ancient bindings that crowded the bookshelves in a room called the red parlour, where everything was bookshelf and window seat and corner cupboard, and which had the most charming bay window looking on the garden of the lemon tree; made us all breakfast at six and dine at twelve, and gave me such lovely tea in old china cups, with bowls of Devonshire cream and great heaps of

strawberries and delightful quince marmalade, at three o'clock ; and sent me to bed by daylight, with a slice of bread and cream for supper, all the year round. She taught me everything I know : she was a wonderful old lady, and rumour said she knew all the Bible and Shakespeare by heart. I learnt to milk cows, and make cream and butter, and look after poultry and pigeons, and a hundred other things. I made very few acquaintances, for it is a lonely corner of the world : and I was very content with Cousin Ann, as I called her, and the lively society of the farm. You have no idea what fun can be got out of horses and dogs and cows and sheep and pigs ; out of turkeys and geese and fowls. Besides, there were men and lads at work, and one old gardener who was Cousin Ann's factotum, and maid servants, apprenticed by the parish, whom I in time had to help teach, and learnt a good deal that way myself. Rather a different life from your Florentine palace and gardens, Raffaella."

"O, but pleasant and homely, and full of health. I should have liked it. Why see what a woman it has made you, Elinor ! And did Mr. Carington come and see you, as he did me ?"

"Yes, when he was in England. He was travelling at times. He used to ride over from Exeter—he is very fond of riding—staying on his way at any country inn that he knew. It was a great treat to see him, you may be sure : he used to find out what I had been reading, and tell me what to read next, and wander all over the farm with me, and take me out to sea to catch lobsters with old Boniface, the only fisherman within a mile. Those were the only times when I was allowed to sit up late—late enough, that is, to want a candle to undress by. Cousin Ann always did whatever Mr. Carington asked her."

"A happy kind of life," said the Marchesa. "Better than mine has been : better far. How did it come to an end, my Elinor ?"

"Cousin Ann died," answered Elinor, sadly, "and the old farm went to some more distant cousin, with a wife and many children. So of course Mr. Carington took charge of me again : and for a time I lived very quietly in lodgings at Salisbury, with an old lady, a clergyman's widow, who took me in to oblige Mr. Carington. That was very dull."

"So I should think. I think I should even prefer milking cows. But why are you here ? and who are you ?"

"I am here chiefly because Mr. Carington chooses, but I came first by an accident." Of the Prince she thought best to make no mention, or of her adventures with Frank. "Who I am I cannot tell you : I only know that I am supposed to be in some way related to the Delamere family."

"O let us guess how !" she cried, setting Tasso off again to an extent that would have astonished "Adria's gondolier." "Perhaps you are the Earl's daughter. I do declare there is a likeness. If so, poor Frank Noel will be desperate, for of course you will want to marry some great prince."

"O, I am not his daughter : I don't believe he ever married. He has led a curious life, but I like him much better than I thought possible, from all I had heard. No: I suppose I am a poor relation, and Mr. Carington thinks he ought to leave me a legacy. But I don't care in the least : I stay here because I am told, and because I like it—"

"And like me too, I hope," said the Marchesa.

"Very much, for a conspirator," said Elinor, laughing.

"O you are a conspirator yourself. You are conspiring to marry Frank Noel : that's why you care so little for legacies."

"What a tease you are ! How shall I punish you ?"

She caught the Marchesa up, as if she had been a child, and placed her right on the malachite slab of a lofty sideboard opposite the fireplace : there, standing between two bronze warriors that carried lamps on the ends of their javelins, and were rather taller than Raffaella, she looked a living statuette, shrouded in ermine and swansdown. Tasso the while was alternately barking and tearing fiercely at Elinor's gown, which his small teeth seriously injured.

Just in the middle of this romp, who should enter but Mr. Carington with letters in his hand ? He laughed.

"So, ladies, you have found a way to amuse yourselves this dull weather. Quite right. Raffaella, you will never be able to get down from that lofty position. You make a pretty ornament. I think I could find a glass case in this big house, that would just suit you. Pray, why have you put the little mischief up there, Elinor—to look at, or to get her out of the way ?"

"Both, sir, I think."

"We have been telling each other our stories, Frank," said Raffaella : "and a certain Mr. Noel's name occurred so often in Elinor's, that I couldn't help wondering what relation they could be to each other."

"Or what they intend to be," said Mr. Carington, laughing as he lifted her down. "By the way, I have a letter from Frank Noel which I brought up for you to read. It is so amusing."

"Is the Canon better ?"

"Much. And Frank wants to come here and see me . . . I cannot conceive why."

"O !" said Raffaella : "And why does he not come ? Somebody will welcome him."

"You, I suppose. The poor boy can't get away . . . don't faint, Elinor . . . because there is a lady in the case. But you must read his letter."

In that letter Frank was impatiently eloquent about his desire to see Carington, but described, with a deal of fun, the difficulty placed in his way, by the presence of that agreeable and astute young person, Miss Gertrude Wilkinson.

(To be continued.)

THE
SAINT PAULS MAGAZINE.

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THE OWL'S NEST IN THE CITY.

CHAPTER VI.

"To be
In love where scorn is sought with groans."

I CANNOT tell how Dick and James passed that night. I know that I was far too agitated and excited to sleep.

It was the first time that any one of the opposite sex (poor old Withers had never even suggested the idea of sex to my mind) had slept in that house since I entered it, and her very presence beneath our roof appeared to transform the worm-eaten old mansion into a fairy palace.

Mysterious yearnings awoke within me; my pulses beat, and my blood was in a tumult, I knew not why; nor could I have declared even to my own heart whether my sensations were more of pain than pleasure. Something told me that I should never be the same again; yet I, who had always been eager to confide every new sensation or feeling to Dick, had now no greater anxiety than to conceal my trouble from him, and when he addressed me shortly after I was in bed I feigned sleep, to avoid a conversation which I felt would be at that moment impossible.

At length, at daybreak, I fell into an uneasy slumber, from which I was roused at an early hour by James, who entered our room on tiptoe, with a candle in his hand.

"I say," he whispered, "*she* can't eat the breakfast we have."

"That's true!" we exclaimed, in dismay; "what shall we do?"

"Why, we must buy something or other. I can't go out to get anything, for I should not be back before the clerks come, perhaps; and, besides, I don't know what to get. You must run out, Dick, and look at the shops; see, here's all the money I have."

"It's very little," said Dick, jumping out of bed and feeling in his own pockets; "but I've got nearly two pounds left. But we don't know what she likes."

There was a pause of consideration. At length I hazarded the suggestion: "She must take tea or coffee, of course. There's always tea, so suppose you bring some coffee, and some cream and fruit."

"But she had no supper," said James, "so she ought to have meat."

"Not our horrid cold meat," said Dick.

"Buy some game," suggested James.

"But can Withers cook it?" said Dick.

"The worst of all," said I, with a keen remembrance of the manifold disgusts of my first week in that house—"the worst of all is that everything's so dirty!"

"Withers alone is enough, to begin with," said Dick.

"But we can't change Withers," said James, mournfully; "and, even if we get a decent breakfast to-day, what shall we do to-morrow, when Dick's gone, and we've no more money?"

There was another pause, during which we looked from one to another in great perplexity.

"The fact is," said Dick, at length, "there's no good in making a struggle only for one day. If Uncle Earle don't understand that a lady requires things in a very different style to us, why, we must teach him, that's all."

"Ah! but who's to bell the cat?" said I.

"I will," said Dick, buttoning up his coat with an air of great resolution. "I'll go at once and speak to him before he gets up."

James and I watched him across the hall, and saw him knock at Mr. Earle's door, with feelings akin to those which the accomplices of a conspirator upon whom the lot has fallen, might watch him depart to fire a mine; but the hero returned in a few moments, crestfallen and disturbed.

Mr. Earle, after laughing heartily at his zeal, had assured him he was quite welcome to make any arrangements he thought fit, but that, for his own part, as he had not the slightest desire to induce Miss Paton to take up her abode at X Court, he was quite content to allow her to see the family *en déshabille*.

We were at first much cast down by this report; but, at length, James said—

"Never mind, we have enough money for to-day. Run and get something now, Dick, and this evening I'll have a talk with my father about it."

"Pooh!" said Dick, "what does he care?"

"Nothing, of course, as yet; but leave it to me, and when he knows Mr. Earle does not wish her to stay, perhaps he will help us. At any rate it's worth trying."

"Indeed it is," said I, "if it were only to spite Earle."

"I don't care about spiting Earle," said Dick, "though he was very disagreeable, certainly; but for the poor young lady's sake, it

is worth trying—so here goes!" he cried, catching up his hat and running downstairs.

As soon as he was gone, I proceeded upstairs to see if anything could be done to interest Mrs. Withers in the matter; but I found her so far from amiably disposed, that my courage failed, and I waited in extreme anxiety for Dick's return. While I was leaning over the banisters, in expectation of his arrival, I was surprised to hear loud voices in Mr. Earle's private room, and still more astonished when, shortly afterwards, the door opened, and Miss Paton came out, looking flushed and uneasy. Mr. Earle followed her to the door of her own room, saying, "It is too late to adopt any other plan now, so I presume I may understand that you are willing to follow my advice?"

"I will tell you presently; let me think it over," she answered; and then, entering her own room, she closed the door rather unceremoniously, without waiting to hear any more.

Mr. Earle also returned to his own room, whistling softly to himself, which was a habit he had when annoyed.

A moment more and I had the satisfaction to see Dick come in, the triumphant bearer of a cold roast pheasant, some coffee, and a splendid bunch of autumn violets. "The rolls and cream are coming," he said, bounding up the kitchen stairs; "now, Withers, make haste and make some coffee."

It was not without a good deal of coaxing that we prevailed upon the old woman to exert herself. "Who's Miss, I wonder, that a body has to makē such a fuss over her?" she said, sulkily. We, however, prevailed upon her to produce a clean table-cloth, and having placed it ourselves upon the table in great haste, lest Miss Paton should leave her room before our labours were accomplished, we went upstairs again to see what progress Withers had made. While in the kitchen we were startled by a strange cry in the hall below. Dick rushed downstairs, and I, following him as quickly as my lameness would allow, saw Mr. Prescott half reclining on the old-fashioned window-seat, supported by James, while Dick held a glass of brandy to his lips, which had been brought by Mr. Earle from his own room. My uncle's face was ghastly white, and wore an expression of terror.

"Good God! what has happened?" I asked, in great alarm.

"Oh, nothing in any way serious," replied Earle. "Your uncle came home late last night, and so was not aware of Miss Paton's arrival. He happened to meet her just now as she came out of her room, and was startled, that's all. Go to Miss Paton," he added, motioning Dick towards the dining-room, "and tell her not to be uneasy, as Mr. Prescott is quite recovered."

Quite recovered!—he was still shaking like a leaf, while poor James, the only one who really cared for him, wiped away the large drops of perspiration that stood upon his forehead.

Miss Paton was leaning against the fire-place, in the dining-room, when I went in. She looked pale and agitated, and appeared little comforted by the explanations offered by Dick.

"Mr. Prescott is better now, madam," I said, venturing, for the first time, to address her.

"I am glad of it," she replied, absently, without looking round; then turning abruptly to Dick, she said, "Are there any more strange people in this strange house?"

"No," said Dick, smiling; "you have seen the whole household now."

"And what a household!" said she shuddering.

My uncle Prescott did not take breakfast with us. James silently poured out a cup of tea, and carried it with the newspaper into his father's room, and we saw him no more that day.

Mr. Earle came in a few moments afterwards, and, inviting Miss Paton to be seated, did the honours of the breakfast table with much grace, and evidently exerted himself to remove the painful impression produced upon her mind, by explaining that the room she had occupied had been the bed-room of the late Mrs. Prescott, and that as my uncle was not aware of Miss Paton's presence in the house, the sight of a lady coming out of that room had naturally startled him. "If he had had time to look at you," he added, playfully, "the impression produced would certainly have been the reverse of painful."

"Time to look at me!" exclaimed Miss Paton; "Heaven knows, he looked at me enough. It is very singular," she added, with a half-irritable, half-coquettish smile. "I must, I suppose, be very frightful, since everybody goes into fits at the sight of me."

"Everybody!" said Mr. Earle.

"Mrs. Withers, uncle," said Dick, smiling, "behaved nearly as strangely last night, as my father did this morning."

Mr. Earle's brow darkened; but, after a moment's hesitation, he said,

"The poor old woman is getting past work and silly; but you shall not be annoyed by her any more. We will get a nice cheerful young person to wait upon you, and keep the old owl out of the way in her nest upstairs."

Soon after this James went down to the office, and Mr. Earle, after reminding Dick that he had to return that morning to W——, followed James out of the room; but I heard him go upstairs, and felt certain that he was gone to make arrangements with Withers for the coming of a new servant.

Miss Paton soon forgot the annoyance she had felt, for she conversed very gaily with Dick, and appeared to take great pleasure in his undisguised admiration. The idea of feeling jealous of Dick never occurred to me. Even if I had not loved him so well, I was

too humble to dream of comparing myself to so glorified a being as an officer in the —th Dragoons. Nevertheless Miss Paton's utter neglect of me depressed me even more than the fact of Dick's approaching departure. The two stood talking together by the fireplace, perfectly oblivious of my presence ; and after drawing patterns on the table-cloth with my fork till I was tired, I left my chair, and betook myself to my accustomed corner on the window-seat. I had, I think, a faint hope that this movement would attract Dick's attention, and that he would say something to me, so as to enable me to make one in their cheerful conversation. He took no notice, however : the charms and graces of Miss Paton completely absorbed his attention, and for the first time he forgot his habits of protection and encouragement towards me.

Mortified by their forgetfulness of my presence, yet not wishing to betray my discomfiture, I retreated completely behind the curtain, and leaning my head against the window frame, fell into a mournful reverie, from which I was roused by hearing Dick say "Good-bye."

"Good-bye," said Miss Paton ; "what on earth will become of me when you are gone, and I am left alone among these mad people and savages?"

"Savages !" repeated Dick ; "oh no ! you will not find Ned and James savages. Poor James is dull, because he is overworked ; but you will always have Ned, and he is so clever, and quite a poet, I assure you."

"What, that poor lame boy ! what use can he be ?"

Lame boy ! I instinctively shrank still further behind the red curtain at the words ; but in the midst of the pain they gave me, the thought of Lord Byron and Mary Chaworth was a sort of bitter satisfaction to my vanity.

"When you know Ned," said Dick, with a tone of reproach in his voice, "you will think as I do, that his lameness only makes him more interesting. Remember, Lord Byron was lame."

"Yes," said Miss Paton, laughing ; "but then you know Lord Byron was—Lord Byron."

Before Dick could say another word in my favour, Mr. Earle came in, watch in hand, and reminded him that there was barely time left for him to pack his trunk and catch the coach. With a hasty adieu to Miss Paton, Dick hurried out of the room. I longed to follow him, but delicacy towards Miss Paton prevented me from moving. I was unwilling to inflict upon her the pain I fancied she would feel on perceiving she had been overheard. Had I known her better, I should not have hesitated.

"Now, Miss Paton," said Earle, closing the door, "before I go to business, let me be quite sure we understand each other. I requested you this morning to be advised by me, at least so far as to wait six

months more, before taking any further steps to shake your father's resolution. Do you consent to promise this?"

"Since you say you have such strong hopes that your letter may be successful, and since I have neither means nor inclination to attempt a journey to India without some word of hope or encouragement, I do not see what other course is left to me. If, however, at the end of six months, your negotiations should have failed, I shall feel at liberty to adopt some other means of obtaining my rights."

"What other means?" said Mr. Earle.

"If all appeal to his heart should prove useless, I shall no longer refrain from——" she stopped short.

"From what?" asked Earle.

"That is my secret," she replied, playfully; but I saw she felt she had gone too far.

"Surely you cannot mean that you distrust me, Miss Paton?"

"I do not mistrust you, Mr. Earle, but my position is very painful and peculiar; and you are, personally, a stranger to me."

"Of course—of course, you are quite right; but I hope you will soon cease to regard me as a stranger."

"I hope so, too," said Miss Paton, sadly. "Heaven knows I have need of friends."

So saying she left the room, and Mr. Earle, after remaining for a few moments absorbed in thought, went downstairs.

I now hurried to Dick's room, and found him just about to start.

"I am coming with you to the coach, Dick," I said.

"Why, what's the matter? how strange you look! and where have you been all this while?"

"Never mind now, Dick; make haste," said I, hurrying downstairs at a speed as uncommon as it was inconvenient to me. Then seizing Dick's arm as soon as we were out of X Court, I said in a low voice, "I want to speak to you, but I can't while the office porter is following. Let's call a cab, and take the box outside."

Dick instantly hailed a passing cab, and dismissed the porter, saying he found it was too late to walk.

"Now, Ned, what is it?" he asked, as soon as we were seated.

"I was behind the curtain in the dining-room just now, and——"

The colour flew over Dick's face as he interrupted me. "Dear Ned, she did not mean to be unkind; it was only thoughtlessness."

"I don't mean that, Dick; never mind me just now. When you went away I heard all she and Mr. Earle said. I am certain there is something wrong going on: I am positive he is telling her lies."

"Lies! what about? what for?"

"I don't know; but they talked of her affairs. It seems as if her father was angry with her, and has denied her some right; and Earle has told her that her father is in India, and all the while her father is dead."

"How do you know that?" said Dick, in amazement.

"Because I remember, as if it had been yesterday, all he told my uncle about her when first he expected she might come, eleven months ago. I know he said her father was dead."

I then repeated to Dick all I had heard on that occasion, but I failed to make the impression I desired. He could see no motive for this deception, he said, and thought I might have been mistaken. Moreover, he could not understand the distrust and dislike I showed when speaking of Mr. Earle. "I am sure he has always behaved better to us than my father has," he said, "and yet you seem to me almost to hate him."

I was embarrassed; I could not explain to him how much reason I had to dislike Earle; but I reminded him of the story I had told him before of the mysterious foreign letter.

He was shaken, but not quite convinced. I think the nobility of his own nature made him shrink from believing his uncle capable of such a meanness. "After all," he said, "you see you can't be sure. You did not yourself read the direction, and old Withers might really have made a mistake. And even if you are right, although it was very mean and wicked, I don't see what it has to do with Miss Paton."

"No, no, I don't say that it has; but it shows there is nothing too bad for him to do; and then his face, Dick, his face this morning looked exactly as it did then. I am certain he was telling lies."

I saw that the earnestness of my conviction rendered Dick uneasy in spite of himself. But we had now reached the coach-office, and had no time for further conversation on the subject.

"I shall come home as often as ever I can," he said, colouring,—perhaps, because he felt that I knew what was the attraction,—“and meanwhile keep your eyes open for her sake, and if you find out anything, write to me. Watch over her, dear Ned,” he added, as he turned away to mount the box. In another moment he was out of sight, and his last look as he waved his hand said as plainly as eyes could speak, “Watch over her.”

CHAPTER VII.

"Must he needs die?"

Maiden, no remedy."—SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN I reached X Court again, I found Miss Paton in the dining-room seated in my accustomed place in the window-seat. Her attitude was so graceful and so melancholy that I was touched by her appearance; and when she looked up with a smile, as if she found even my entrance some relief, I forgot everything but my sympathy

for her loneliness, and thought only of how I should render our gloomy dwelling less odious in her eyes.

"Well, Mr. Lovel," she said: "your friend Cornet Prescott tells me you will be my cavalier. You will have to make yourself very entertaining, for I assure you I am already devoured by that English spleen of which I used to hear so much in France."

"In France!" I exclaimed. "And Mr. Earle said you were an Italian! Then that is another lie."

"Is Mr. Earle in the habit of telling lies?" said Miss Paton, eagerly.

I was confounded at my own rash folly. "No, no," I stammered out, awkwardly enough; "of course he—I mean I, was mistaken."

"You at least do not tell them very cleverly," she said, laughing at my confusion. "Pray tell me," she added after a pause, "what do you do to amuse yourselves in this dull old house?"

"Nothing—we have no amusements. We always go on in the same manner, day after day. My uncle, Mr. Earle, and James are in the office at work, and I pass my days like a squirrel, turning round and round uselessly in a cage."

"But have you never any visitors? do you never pay visits?"

"Never."

"Good Heavens! how am I to exist here for six months?"

"I have existed here for thirteen long years; but indeed the place is not fit for such as you."

"Fit! It is not fit for a dog!" said Miss Paton petulantly. "It would be worse than a convent, were it not that at least one can go in and out; and, *à propos!* will you show me the way to the nearest Catholic chapel?"

I had never heard of any Catholic chapel near, but aware that James knew London better than I did, I offered to go down to the office to seek him. I found him seated at his desk, but not at work. He was leaning his head on his hands, and he did not raise it till I put my hand upon his shoulder, and asked the desired information.

He rose languidly and came upstairs with me to show me the exact situation of the chapel on the map of London that hung in our dining-room. I have but little genius for topography, and it was some time before I had fixed in my mind the names of the streets through which we were to pass. When at last I turned to Miss Paton to declare my readiness to accompany her, her eyes were intently fixed on James, and I was struck with the mournful earnestness of their expression. When we had left the house, she said—

"I suppose you all know that young man is dying?"

"James! dying!" I exclaimed; "why he is not even ill."

"Not ill! Nonsense; he is in the last stage of consumption. Is it possible you do not notice how haggard he looks?"

"But he was always so. At our school the boys used to call him 'the ghost'!"

"Did you notice the perspiration on his forehead, this cold day?"

"He always does perspire."

"But that cough!"

"I never remember James without a cough."

"All you say only convinces me still more strongly that I am right. My poor mother died of consumption, and I assure you as I looked at him just now, there was something in the expression of his face, something even in his manner of breathing, that reminded me so strongly of her, I felt quite strange."

We reached the chapel door as she spoke. Mass was just begun, and the bewildering novelty of the scene (I had never entered church or chapel of any kind since my mother's death), the pictorial beauty of the ceremony, the charms of the music, and the pleasure of contemplating my beautiful companion at her devotions, effaced the painful impression caused by her last words. I was soon so entranced by all around me as to completely forget the present in a delicious dream, from which I was only roused by Miss Paton rising from her knees and touching my arm to remind me it was time to return.

In the evening, however, when James came upstairs, Miss Paton's remarks concerning him recurred to my mind; and as I looked at him in the new light they afforded, I was so struck by his air of lassitude and suffering, that I wondered by what strange chance it had escaped me until then. My heart yearned towards him with an amount of affection that astonished myself, and my eyes filled with tears as I watched him constantly wiping his clammy brow, and asked myself how I could have been blind so long. As soon as Miss Paton retired for the night, I went up to him, and putting my arm round his neck as I had been wont to do when a child, I said—

"You look very pale, Jim; do you think you are ill?"

"I am afraid I must be, Ned," he answered. "I don't know what ails me exactly, but I'm always so deadly tired now that I really can hardly work at all."

"Only tired? don't you feel any pain?"

"No; only a little when I cough."

"Then what is it that prevents you from working?"

"Every now and then I feel so strange and faint, and sometimes I can't see. I thought at first the office must be close; but when I go out into the air my knees tremble, and it seems as if I could not breathe. I suppose I must have worked too hard; but you see I must work if we are ever to get rid of Earle. Father works night and day."

"But why do you both hate him so?"

"I don't know how it began. I hate him because he bullies father ; and because, whatever the cause, I see father will never have any peace till he is rid of him." •

"And how do you hope to do it ?"

"To buy him out, to be sure. We have nearly got enough now. He has promised to retire as soon as he can buy all the rest of the land belonging to B—— Grange, in Somersetshire, which mother left him in her will."

"But why did she leave it to him instead of her children ?" I ventured to ask ; for I was anxious to discover how much James knew of the sad history of the past which old Withers had revealed to me.

"I'm afraid she must have done it to spite father," he answered, sadly ; "I know they did not agree."

"But, James, you must not go on working so. If your father knew you were ill, he would not wish it ; for I am sure he loves you."

"Yes, he says sometimes that I am the only one he loves ; that's not fair to you or Dick, I know, but when I see how wretched he is, I feel I must go on working till Earle is bought out."

I felt differently, for now that my attention had once been drawn to the state of James's health, the alarm with which I recognized all the evil symptoms pointed out by Miss Paton was in proportion to my former insensibility.

I determined I would speak privately to my uncle on the subject that very night, and suggest that he should consult some eminent physician. I felt ashamed to think that, had I not been so selfishly wrapped up in my own grief after Dick's departure, I must sooner have noticed James's illness. Had I sought to make him a companion, he would have confided in me before ; for I well knew that his habitual reserve sprang from diffidence rather than coldness. A horrible fear haunted me that it might already be too late, and I waited in great anxiety until all were in bed but myself, and then hastened to my uncle's room with a beating heart.

His face grew white as he listened to all I had to say ; yet at first he struggled against conviction.

"It cannot be true, Ned," he cried ; "if things were as bad as you say, I must have seen it. The poor lad's over-worked, as he says, but he shall go to the sea-side, and then——"

"But, uncle, even he himself thinks he is really ill, and you know he is not one to make a fuss."

"That's very true. I'll send for Dr. F—— to-morrow. He's the great man for this sort of case, you know. It will be a satisfaction to hear what he has to say, but you'll find it is nothing in the world but over-work," he repeated, evidently trying to persuade himself rather than me.

The next morning my uncle wrote to Dr. F—— as soon as he

was up, and before three o'clock the great doctor's carriage rolled beneath the archway of X Court. I immediately sent Withers to the office to fetch my uncle and James, and then left the room.

In about ten minutes James came out.

"Well?" said I eagerly.

"Oh, he says I shall soon be better; but I'm to go to Devonshire for a little while, just till the weather gets warm. It's a mere nothing, evidently."

"Then what is he waiting for?"

"He said he wanted to consult my father upon some law business, and he asked me to leave them alone altogether."

My heart sank within me. I instinctively felt that the doctor had sent him away in order to give a very different report of the case to his father, and I wondered to see the poor patient so utterly unsuspecting of this.

"By the way," he said, "Dr. F—— said I had better lie down: and Withers is to light a fire in my room; will you tell her?"

I ran to fetch Withers, and then again took up my station in the hall to watch for the doctor's departure. In a few moments the dining-room bell rung; and as Withers was in James's room, I answered it.

My uncle was sitting at the table, his face covered with his hands.

"Get Mr. Prescott a little brandy and water," whispered the doctor as he glided out: "he has been much overcome."

I ran to my uncle's private room, and found some brandy. I urged him to drink some, but it was long before I could make him even understand what I said. He stared at me like a man in a dream.

"Uncle, do drink this: it will do you good. You know, you must not let James see you so."

"Give it to me," he said at last, seizing the bottle and eagerly drinking the raw spirit. "I cannot see him yet, Ned," he added. "My poor, poor boy! If he asks for me, say I am gone out."

He rose and walked to his room like one under the influence of a nightmare. I shuddered at the look of his face as he closed the door, for I saw too plainly written there—*no hope*.

When my uncle was sufficiently composed to speak to me, I learned from him that the doctor had intimated that the end was very near. Mr. Prescott had proposed to leave business in order to take his son to a warmer climate; but Dr. F—— had dissuaded him from this, assuring him that the disease was so far advanced that the fatigue of a long journey would probably be immediately fatal. He had, however, seeing that the young man had set his heart on going to the sea-side, recommended his removal, by easy stages, to Devonshire.

I wrote directly to Dick, and the sad tidings brought him to X

Court at once. I was anxious to accompany the travellers, and my uncle readily consented ; but in the evening, when Dick and I were alone with James, to my surprise he requested me to stay in London.

"I shall not be very long away, Ned," he said, "and I cannot bear to think of that poor young lady left alone here with Mr. Earle. I have spoken to my father about everything being so neglected and uncomfortable, and he has promised me to give Withers some money, and tell her to set things to rights ; but you know what Withers is— if there is no one to look after her, nothing will be done.

"Besides," he added, lowering his voice, "I'm sure he will be unkind to her. There's a screw loose somewhere, and I meant to have found it out ; but one thing is certain, he wants her to go back to France, and if no one takes her part, he will manage it against her will. Father came into my room last night after you were in bed, and when he opened the door I heard some one crying, and I asked him to go and see what was the matter. When he came back he said : 'Earle is badgering that poor girl about something : I could not hear all they said, but I think he wants to drive her back to France.'"

I now eagerly told James of my own suspicions ; and I believe I should have confided to him the story of the intercepted letter, had not a warning look from Dick reminded me that Dr. F—— had expressly forbidden all irritation or excitement. I however agreed to remain in London.

The next morning when the post-chaise came to the door, poor James was in high spirits at the idea of seeing the sea. He whispered to me to be sure to write him word how matters went on, and added : "If Earle bullies, you know you can send for Dick." He seemed pleased at the warmth of Dick's and my parting embrace, and his last words to me were, "I shall work double time for father when I come back !"

Poor, gentle, uncomplaining, unselfish lad ! I understood him too late. I never saw him alive again.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Question your desires,
Know of your youth, examine well your blood,
Whether
You can endure the livery of a nun ;
For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd,
To live a barren sister all your life,
Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon."

SHAKESPEARE.

"Hath not thy rose a canker, Somerset ?—*Ibid.*

Dick returned to W—— the same day, and I was again left alone with Miss Paton. And then began a life of delicious torture which

I—poor foolish lad that I was!—would not have exchanged for any amount of healthy rational happiness that could have been offered to me. Regarding myself as the sole champion of injured innocence, and knowing that my beautiful companion was entirely dependent upon me for every trifling amelioration of the weight of her daily existence, I made it a duty to submit to her every whim or caprice, and resolutely shut my eyes to the selfishness of the tyranny she established over me, until I became her very slave—a slave more degraded because I hugged my chain. I should have been less contemptible had I been deceived as to the character of the lovely despot; but I saw plainly enough that admiration and pleasure were the end and aim of her existence,—that she was quite indifferent as to the pain she inflicted, or the pleasure she gave to others, except in so far as it reflected upon herself; and I saw, though I strove to hide it from myself, that I was utterly insignificant in her eyes, and my admiration valueless, except in the absence of homage more flattering.

I became gradually more conscious that she went to chapel to be seen; that she *posed* at prayers, and demurely delighted in the admiration she excited; nay, at last I clearly recognized the fact that when she was followed home by some audacious admirer (which happened not unfrequently) she would adopt a bewitching manner to me which she never assumed when we were alone; and that, although she would profess the prettiest annoyance and distress at the “insolence of such persecution,” she would at such times laugh and talk to me with a vivacity and animation so charming that, even while I knew it to be inspired by coquetry and vanity, it delighted my boyish pride and bewildered and intoxicated my senses. I saw that I was used as an instrument, and played upon merely to display the grace of the performer; yet I was base enough to glory in such ignominious service, and revel in the consciousness of the envy I inspired. I could not hide from myself the fact that, when Dick came home, Miss Paton had neither eyes nor ears for me. I was then quite forgotten and neglected; her smiles were brighter and lovelier for him. Yet though I was pained at the change, it never occurred to me to feel angry with Dick. I recognized his innocence in the matter, and felt how impossible it was for him to suspect the difference there was in Miss Paton's behaviour to me out of his sight. Indeed the only thing I can look back upon with satisfaction, as regards my own conduct at this period, is the fact that the tortures I underwent through jealousy did not diminish my affection for him. I did not even blame her in my own heart for preferring him to me, and I rejoiced to hope that the honour and glory of Dick's admiration would render her indifferent to the paltry gratification of seeing herself regularly followed home from mass by a certain aristocratic-looking young man for whom I had a special aversion.

This gentleman had learned to know the usual hours of her attendance at chapel, and was in the habit of taking up his position where he could fix his eyes upon her during the whole of the ceremony. He was an elegant young man, with a certain air of high breeding which annoyed me; and upon him I concentrated all the anger which I ought to have felt against Miss Paton herself; because nothing would have been easier than for her to change the place, or even only the hours of her devotions, had she really objected to his behaviour. I endeavoured at first to intimidate him with haughty defiance of my glance and bearing, but he never appeared conscious of my presence, and continued to fix his bold eyes upon my companion, with an expression which she certainly ought to have resented. At last, I said to her that I wondered she made no attempt to avoid one so impertinent; but she scornfully told me in reply that, since I only accompanied her in order to criticize her conduct, she would go to chapel alone. I was mean enough to apologize, and declare myself in the wrong; but she would not relent, and forbade my attending her to mass for the future.

Dick came to X Court as often as he could, and was not unfrequently accompanied by Captain St. John, who however, upon intimate acquaintance, no longer appeared to me the demi-god I was once disposed to believe him. He had a habit of sucking his stick, which was far from chivalrous-looking, and I discovered that he was neither highly educated nor well read. Still he was always welcome to me. Notwithstanding his superior birth and position, he gave himself no airs of superiority: he shared my admiration for Dick, and was charmed with Miss Paton's beauty and grace, while there was a cordial frankness, and simple, plain-spoken, natural rectitude in him, which often made me ashamed of my own morbid imaginings and cowardly unwillingness to look the truth in the face.

He was the only one of Dick's companions whom he had ever invited to X Court, and I believe he kept the secret of our strange surroundings as carefully as we did ourselves; not that Dick ever asked him to do so, but from an instinctive sense that—as he would have expressed it—"it would not do to talk about it among the fellows."

St. John drove his own horses, and delighted to put them at our service. He would frequently call for us in an open carriage, and in this manner we escorted Miss Paton to many of the sights of London, and made various pleasant excursions to Richmond, Kew, Hampton Court, &c. Nothing certainly could be more opposed to the received ideas of propriety than Miss Paton's position amongst us, yet nothing more innocent in fact. Notwithstanding the intimacy which naturally sprung up between us, we all treated her with the utmost devotion and respect; we were her subjects, and she our queen.

Mr. Earle apparently took no notice of our proceedings, yet he must have been aware of them. I have often wondered since whether he wished that evil might come of it. He certainly never interfered, and even avoided seeing Miss Paton as much as possible; and when in her presence, he had the air of a man absorbed in one idea. At times there was something about him that reminded me of a cat biding her time to spring.

Thanks no doubt to poor James's suggestions, my uncle now kept my purse pretty liberally supplied. Dick had his pay to fall back upon in any emergency, and the household arrangements, though still slovenly and irregular, were somewhat improved since the advent of a young woman as housemaid, who had been engaged by Mr. Earle immediately after Miss Paton's arrival, in order to enable Mrs. Withers to keep herself and her broom out of sight.

One beautiful Sunday in October, when Miss Paton had been nearly six months at X Court, St. John drove us down to Richmond to dinner. After dinner we walked in the park, till Miss Paton was fatigued, and then seated ourselves upon the grass under the trees.

In the course of conversation St. John chanced to say that his sister was to start the next day for a convent in France, where she was to finish her education.

"Oh, Captain St. John," said Miss Paton, with a shudder, "how could you spoil this happy day by talking of convents! I shall fancy I am indeed going back."

"You! were you educated in a convent?"

"I have only very narrowly escaped being buried in one for life."

"In what part of France were you?" asked Dick.

"At Dijon, in the *Couvent des Augustines* there. My mother had retired there, and I was brought up in the convent; so that, never having known any better life, I was content with my fate, poor ignorant child, and it was quite settled and understood that I was to be a nun some day."

"Then what made you change your mind?"

"Oh! Paris—dear Paris! If I had never seen Paris, I suppose I should have remained contented, or at least resigned. My mother had always told me that she had retired from the world, because she had had great sorrows, and was very poor. She wished me to take the veil; and as the sisters were very kind, and I had never known any other life, I took it for granted, as it were, that I must be a nun."

"And how came they to send you to Paris?"

"They did not send me. One of the *élèves*, Eulalie N——, who had always been my best friend there, was fiancée to the rich Monsieur de B——; and when she left the convent, her parents invited me to accompany her to Paris to be present at the wedding. My

mother did not wish me to go, but I had always been able to make my mother do whatever I pleased."

"No wonder," said Dick.

Miss Paton laughed, and continued: "So I did not mind what mamma said; but the Supérieure forbade my going, and then I was in despair. She said it would make me *mondaine*, and destroy my *vocation religieuse*, as if I had ever had any! But Eulalie was so generous and so clever she managed it for me. We all knew that la Mère was the most avaricious old woman possible, and Eulalie promised her that, if she would only consent to my visit, she would vow the best necklace in her *corbeille* to the poor of the convent. Now the poor of the convent meant, in fact, la Mère; because she managed all those things herself, and always kept back the value of half the offerings that were given. La Mère gave way then; only I had to promise that I would begin my noviciate immediately on my return, and Eulalie had to promise to keep the bargain a secret even from Père Joseph."

"Who was Père Joseph?"

"Our confessor. When Eulalie confessed, she told him of her vow, but said nothing about la Mère's share in the matter; so he said she was a *sainte fille*, and that her vow *lui porterait bonheur*. Oh, how Eulalie and I laughed when she told me!"

"It was rather more generous than pious, was it not?" said St. John, sucking his stick.

"Of course; but after she married, she made it all right, for she told her new confessor, l'Abbé Perin, the whole story. I don't think her *pénitence* was very severe, though; for l'Abbé himself could not help laughing about it, because he had once lived at Dijon, and he knew la Mère well."

"What did Monsieur de B—— say?" said I.

"Oh, Monsieur de B—— is quite a Voltairian. You may be sure he laughed heartily at it; and he is so enormously rich that it could not matter to him. Indeed, he gave Eulalie another necklace just like it, so she lost nothing by it in the end."

"And how long did you stay in Paris?"

"Long enough to learn that there is no life anywhere else; long enough to wonder how I could ever have been such a little fool as to look forward with patience to the idea of being made a nun. Ah! how happy I was! Either Madame N—— and Eulalie received at home, or else we went into society, or to the Opera, every evening. Madame N—— and Eulalie gave me my dresses, for I had only my ridiculous *toilette de pensionnaire*, and Madame N—— explained to me how blind my mother must have been in proposing to sacrifice me as she had intended.

"When the time came at which I had promised to return, I wrote to mamma that my eyes were opened; that every one told me I

should be mad to bury myself in a convent, and that I had made up my mind not to go back. Eulalie offered me a home with her, until I should either make a good marriage or find some means of supporting myself."

"Why, what could *you* do to support yourself?" said St. John, bluntly.

Miss Paton smiled strangely. "There are many ways," she said; "but, if it had come to the worst, I had been offered an excellent position as companion to an old friend of Madame N——'s."

"You a companion!" said Dick; "impossible!"

"*Anything* was better than a convent; to that I had made up my mind. Mamma wrote to me telling me that she had vowed to bring me up to take the veil, even before I was born, in expiation of some early sin; but that since I had such a horror of the life, she would not insist upon it any more still that there were reasons why she could not return to the world herself,—that all her life had been dreadfully unhappy, and that she had no consolation in the world but me. She said too that she felt she had a very short time to live, and that if I would only return and stay with her till she died, she would promise never to say another word about my taking the veil, for that all she cared about was to have me with her to the last.

"But I thought all this was very likely a trick to induce me to go back, and so I wrote just once to refuse; and after that whenever her letters came, I sent them back unopened, that she might see I was quite determined. Then Père Joseph wrote to me that the doctors said mamma could not live many months, and that she desired him to say she had something of the utmost importance to communicate to me before she died. I wrote him a severe reply, in which I told him that I had no intention to be duped into returning to Dijon; and that if mamma had really anything important to say, it was surely worth while to come to Paris to say it. Of course I did not believe mamma was really so ill as they said, or I should have known it was impossible. Then Père Joseph wrote to Madame N——, and of course told his own story his own way; and, would you believe it? not only Madame N——, but even Eulalie turned against me, and said I had no heart, and I was obliged to return.

"When I got to Dijon, however, I found it was all true. Poor, dear mamma was really dying, and at first she did not even know me. When she was herself, I asked her what she had to say to me, and she tried to tell me the history of her life; but she had not strength. Every time she began to speak of it, she cried so bitterly, and her cough was so frightful, that I could not understand her. At last, the very night before she died, she told me that she was not a widow as I had supposed, but that she had been so unhappy that she had left her husband and taken refuge in a convent a short time before I was born. She said too that she was not poor, but that she had property

in her own right, and that when she found I would not consent to take the veil, she had determined to claim it for my sake. Then she said she had written to my father in England, asking his forgiveness for concealing my birth, and begging him to see me put in possession of my property. But he would not even answer her: he had sent her word through Mr. Earle that he would never forgive her, and never acknowledge me. She had even offered to send me to England, but Mr. Earle told her it would make matters worse.

"All this poor mamma told me little by little, and even this I scarcely know how; for she kept dozing off, as it were, and sometimes I had quite to shake her, in order to rouse her and ask her the same question fifty times before she understood; even as it is, she died without telling me the most important thing of all."

"What was that?" said all three listeners.

"She said that Mr. Earle was bound to see justice done to me; but that if he would not do so, I was to go to a relation of hers to whom she had sent her papers and her last will, and she never told me this person's name.

"All through that last night, whenever she opened her eyes and looked at me I asked her, 'Mamma, mamma, tell me the name of the person who will see me righted; mamma, the name, the name!' And indeed I think she often understood, for she seemed to try hard to speak, but she could not; and now I suppose I shall never know. Mr. Earle may know; but I sometimes fancy that he is not really my friend, and so I have not even told him what mamma said. I have only hinted that there are other means, if he does not help me; but, in sober truth, owing to mamma's absurd secrecy until it was too late, there are none.

"Mr. Earle declares he is doing all he can to soften my father's flinty heart; but of course he must be a brute, or why should mamma have left him?"

"Sometimes people don't agree, without exactly being brutes," said St. John, removing his stick for the first time from his lips.

"Oh, I dare say! Very likely my parents were neither better nor worse than others. They were welcome to quarrel of course as much as they pleased; but they might have had the kindness to put my property in safe keeping first. But it is getting late; we had better go back. By the way, gentlemen, Mr. Earle desired me not to speak of my affairs to anybody, so you must all promise to keep my secret."

We all readily promised, and I am sure we all kept our word. We retraced our steps in silence towards the gate leading on to Putney Heath, where St. John's carriage was appointed to meet us, Dick and Miss Paton leading the way. All at once St. John, who had been sucking his cane worse than ever, suddenly stopped short, and said to me,—

"I say, Lovel, damn it, you know!—isn't there something about

honouring thy father and thy mother? I'm not much of a hand at religion, but still—damn it, you know——”

“I do know, St. John, that it was not a very pleasant story to hear, although very prettily told. I wonder what Dick thinks of all this?”

“Oh, he's so head over ears in love with her, he don't see things very clearly. And, after all, perhaps it is scarcely her fault. I suppose one would get half mad if one thought one was going to be shut up in a convent, and so——”

“And so have no feeling for any one else, do you mean?”

St. John was silent.

There was none of the usual light-hearted talk as we drove home. Dick and Miss Paton sat behind, and they were either silent, or spoke in so low a tone as to exclude those on the front seat from their conversation.

I was pondering over St. John's words, “he's so head over ears in love with her.” How often had I told myself that I was madly in love with her? Why then was I so clear-sighted, and Dick so blind? I began to suspect that the difference lay in that Dick loved with all his heart and soul, while I had called that love which was mere sensual passion. When I was alone with Miss Paton, and she chose to exert her power, she swayed me as absolutely as she did him; but through the tumult of my senses, rather than the intensity of my affection, and when the spell of that ignoble intoxication was broken, my true self was unaltered.

While these thoughts were passing through my mind, St. John teased his horses—a thing I never saw him do before—and whistled. I looked at him from time to time in the moonlight. His usual *insouciant*, happy expression was changed: he still looked puzzled and disturbed. Perhaps he was trying to remember where he had heard that awkward something about “honouring thy father and thy mother.”

(To be continued.)

PALMISTRY.*

WHY do gypsies so often "tell truly?" How are they enabled to reveal the past in such a surprisingly correct manner? Why are their prophecies so often fulfilled? These questions are frequently asked, and among the many solutions that are offered is the following: Because they are guided in the study of character by laws which are strictly laid down, laws which are as certain and as clear as any of the maxims of physiognomy (to which we all attach more or less faith); truer and more significant than any except the outline-rules of phrenology. That gypsies show an extraordinary *clairvoyance* is beyond dispute. Their successes are too numerous and too well authenticated to be always explained away as coincidences or as "happy hits." The cases recorded in proof of their uncommon skill in discerning disposition and natural endowments are innumerable; and those who know the character of a person are in a position to guess very shrewdly at that person's fate. Not that a particular lot attaches by an inevitable fatality to any mental or moral qualities, but certain natures seem formed with an aptitude for surrounding themselves with a certain set of circumstances. "There's a Divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will;" but to a great extent we make our own fate, and whoever knows us thoroughly, will also know a great deal about our past life, and our future.

Anyone wishing to rival the gypsies in the successful study of character, has only to master the art of palmistry. M. Desbarrolles has collected and sifted their traditional lore and written records, and all the other materials he could find bearing upon his subject, and he has embodied the chief part of the result of his researches in a book called the "Mysteries of the Hand." It was published eleven years ago, and has attracted much attention amongst the general reading public in France, and it is said to have made some little way also with the scientific people. Eight editions of the book came out in the first eight years of its existence. The subject has strong attractions for several classes of minds: amongst them rank first those who aim at being "discerners of spirits,"—practical metaphysicians, if such a term is allowable; and secondly, a much larger number of enquirers, whose motive is a vulgar curiosity with regard to future events. Palmistry will reward both these classes of students, for, as Lavater, in the words of the ancient philosophers, says, "The whole is in every part." The moral nature is complete

* This paper may be looked upon as a sort of supplement to the one on "Chiro-mancy" published last month.—Ed.

in outline in the hand, and if the gypsies, and others who practise this art, are sometimes at fault, it must be remembered that they are often careless in the application of their rules, and sometimes ignorant of those rules.

M. Desbarrolles devotes a large part of his book to the consideration of chiromnomy,—a system invented by a M. d'Arpentigny. Chiromnomy helps us to judge of character by the form of the hand, and the shape of the fingers. Palmistry also takes account of the shape of the hand and the fingers, but relies chiefly upon the indications supplied by the lines and the mounts of the palm. M. d'Arpentigny's attention was directed to the subject in a curious manner. He lived near the owners of a handsome country-house, where there was a constant succession of visitors. The hostess delighted in the society of artists, and gathered painters and musicians round her. The host was devoted to the exact sciences, and he sought his friends and acquaintances amongst those who shared his tastes. Mechanicians, mathematicians, and "practical people," were his chosen guests. M. d'Arpentigny, though neither a Raphael nor a Stephenson, was a friend of both the lady and the gentleman, and he had facilities for observing all their visitors. He was struck by the dissimilarity between the hands of "Monsieur's" friends and those of the friends of "Madame." The artists had generally short fingers that tapered to a point. The men of science had square-topped fingers, with largely developed finger-joints. M. d'Arpentigny resolved to investigate. He went in search of hands, and found various moral and intellectual characteristics always associated with certain forms of finger. He divides hands into three sorts: the first sort have fingers with pointed tops; the second, square tops; the third, spade-shaped tops. (By "spade-shaped" is meant fingers that are thick at the end, having a little pad of flesh at each side of the nail.) The first type of finger belongs to characters possessed of rapid insight into things; to extra-sensitive people; to pious people, whose piety is of the contemplative kind; to the impulsive; and to all poets and artists in whom ideality is a prominent trait. The second type belongs to scientific people; to sensible, self-contained characters; to most of our professional men, who steer between the wholly-practical course that they of the spade-shaped fingers take, and the too-visionary bent of the people with pointed fingers. The third type pertains to those whose instincts are material; to people who have a genius for commerce, and a high appreciation of everything that tends to bodily ease and comfort; also to people of great activity. Each finger, no matter what the kind of hand, has one joint representing each of these types. Thus, the division of the finger which is nearest the palm stands for the body (and corresponds with the spade-shaped type), the middle division represents mind (the square-topped), the top, soul (the pointed). If the top

joint of the finger be long, it denotes a character with much imagination, or ideality, and a leaning towards the theoretical rather than the practical. The middle part of the finger being large promises a logical, calculating mind—a common-sensed person. The remaining joint long and thick denotes a nature that clings more to the luxuries than to the refinements of life. Things will present themselves to such a nature under a lower aspect, and utility will be accounted before beauty. The above description of the types of hands is far from exhaustive, for each type affords indications of many qualities not even mentioned here. This sketch aims merely at giving a rough idea of this part of chiromnomy. It is well to remember that there are “good hands” to be found in each type—hands that are equal to a letter of recommendation for their owners (only, unfortunately, few can read them!); hands—spade-shaped, square, or pointed—that denote splendid qualities of head and heart; but the highest and best hand of the pointed type, will be something better than the best that the other kinds can boast. It must not be supposed that M. d’Arpentigny found no artists with any but pointed fingers, and no men of science with pointed fingers; but it is observable that those with pointed fingers who take to science, invest their chosen subjects with a certain poetical charm; and, in the same way, an artist with spade-shaped fingers will be found to vulgarise art, or, at least, to treat his subjects in a realistic manner, and to see things from a somewhat commonplace standpoint. Some time and experience will be needed by a beginner to construct the idea of the average proportions of a hand. Only departures from this average hand are really characteristic and significant. A hand conforming itself exactly to the representative hand would portend a being without any individuality—a nonentity. The size of the hand should be in proportion to the rest of the person. The length of the fingers should equal the length of the palm. The palm longer than the fingers would indicate a preponderance of matter over mind: the fingers much longer than the palm, a want of ballast—of common sense: the palm and fingers equal, or nearly equal, shows a proper balance between the spiritual and the material.

The three types are varied almost infinitely by the combination of two or more kinds of hands in one hand. There may be square fingers in the pointed hand, or some spade-shaped. A hand may even contain the three types. Again, there are some hands where none of the fingers are quite square-topped, or quite pointed, or quite spade-shaped; where there are squarish points, or pointed squares, and no fingers of the pure type. These transitional hands are called “mixed,” and they denote the possession of a portion of the gifts of both of the types represented in them. The hands in which all the fingers belong to one type, “pure and unadulterated,” are not often met with. They belong to people who are, if not unnaturally,

at least uncommonly, consistent. It has been said by a novelist, who is a noted student of character, that there is "a curiously mistaken tendency to look for logical consistency in human motives and human actions," but palmistry presents human nature "in its inherent inconsistencies and self-contradictions—in its intricate mixture of good and evil, of great and small."

M. Desbarrolles adopts all that is here set down of M. d'Arpentigny's system, adding to it the study of the palm, in which the principal lines are—the line of life, which runs round the base of the thumb; the line of the head, which begins beside the line of life, between the thumb and the first finger, and crosses the middle of the palm; and the line of the heart, which goes from one side of the hand to the other at the base of the fingers. An unbroken and well-defined line of life signifies good health. A breakage in the line reveals impending sickness, if it be in years to come, or sickness passed, if it be in years gone by. The date can be easily ascertained, as the line of life is divided into portions that represent different ages. Thus: a line is drawn from the middle of the base of the third finger towards the second joint of the thumb, and the point at which it intersects the line of life will mark the age of ten. If the breakage occurs in a grown person's hand at that point, it shows that that person was ill, or met with an accident, when ten years old. If the fault in the line is a little before the point which marks ten years old, then the illness came at the age of nine or eight, and so on, according to the distance from the point. A line parallel to this one, starting from between the third and last finger, will touch the line of life at the point called twenty. Another parallel line, starting from the middle of the base of the little finger, takes you to thirty. The next line goes from the outer edge of the same finger, and gives forty. The line to find fifty starts from a little above the line of the heart. No dot, or cross, belonging to a bygone time, warns or menaces, but such signs would do so if seen in prospect. Palmistry, by forewarning, forearms. There are indications elsewhere, showing what kind of danger to apprehend, and M. Desbarrolles is fond of repeating the old saying, "*Homo sapiens dominabitur astris.*"

A long and well-defined line of the head promises intellectual power. If the line be so long as to go to the edge of the hand it indicates too much calculation—meanness. It should start from the side of the line of life, between the first finger and the thumb, and cross the palm nearly horizontally, losing itself below the third finger, or thereabouts. If the line ends under the second finger, that is to say, about the centre of the palm, it denotes stupidity. If the line be formed of a series of small lines, like a chain, instead of one clear mark, it is a sign of want of concentration of the ideas. A pale line of the head means indecision. If it turn downwards at the wrist,

it indicates a mind that takes a too imaginative view of things. If it be bifurcated at the end, half going downwards, and half continuing in the same direction as the major part of the line, it denotes deceit—double-dealing. This line supplies a great many other indications, but we will now pass on to the line of the heart. If this line be well-marked and if it go from the edge of the hand below the little finger, across the roots of the fingers to the base of the first finger, it promises an affectionate disposition and a good memory. Many mental qualities are promised us by a good line of the heart : it does not merely supply indications regarding the affections. The poetical, or the artistic, or the imaginative, may be inferred as a part of the character foreshadowed by a well-defined, well-coloured line of the heart. A good line of the heart also augurs well for the happiness of its possessor ; the gypsies say it is a “good omen.” If this line sends down short lines towards the line of the head, it may be taken to signify that the love of the person will only be given to those who have already earned that person’s respect—that affection will wait upon esteem. If, on the contrary, the small lines go upwards, towards the fingers, then the likings will be impulsive, and instinctive. A line of the heart with a great many breakages foretells inconstancy.

It is well to remember, that a single sign ought not to make us come to a conclusion about any quality, or any trait of character. A great many indications ought to coincide before we come to a decision. A number of different, and even contradictory, signs, have to be weighed and studied, and a balance arrived at, after giving a proper attention to each. The two hands rarely correspond in every particular. Of the two, the left hand is the most important, but due consideration should be given to each, after both have been thoroughly examined. Lines, if pale and wide, announce the absence of the quality attributed to the particular line, or else, the presence of the defect which is the opposite of the quality. For instance, a pale wide line of the heart may indicate the absence of affection, coldness, or it may denote cruelty. To come to a right conclusion as to the precise significance of any particular mark, or indication, reference must be made to the other parts of the hand, and especially to the type to which the hand belongs. No sign should be overlooked.

M. Desbarrolles counsels chiromancers (or palmists) to take hints wherever they are given. With Lavater he says, that voice, and gait, and dress, and handwriting, are not without their significance, but he adds that the signs are more legible in the hands than elsewhere. He is an Eclectic, gladly picking up crumbs of knowledge wherever he can find them, but professing to reap a larger harvest in the hand than in the face, or on the skull, or, in fact, anywhere. A clever hypocrite will deceive even the keenest-physiognomist by facial tricks and impostures ; but the hands, if not uncontrollable, are, at least,

generally uncontrolled. Sir Arthur Helps makes one of his characters say that some of the leading men in the House of Commons can so divest themselves of expression, that no one can tell, from looking at their faces, whether or no a remark has "struck home." They never wince. But watch their hands! the fingers wrap themselves round each other; they twist and twine: or else, the hands are clenched tightly, as may be seen by the white look about the knuckles. They will be gradually relaxed, and the rigid stiffness will disappear, as the debate glides into smoother channels. Some impassive-looking people banish every outward trace of emotion except one; that is, the reddening, or paling of their nails, as the fingers are pressed more or less strongly against anything that may be under their hand. As for obliterating lines or marks, or fashioning the hand with any hypocritical intent—no one thinks of so doing, if even it be possible.

Each finger, and the mount at the base of it, is named from a planet. In the normal hand the second finger is the longest, the third the next longest, the first nearly as long as the third, and much longer than the fourth, or little finger. Jupiter is the first finger. If it be long and not ill-shapen, and if the mount at its base be well developed, it indicates a noble and lofty character, and a religious-minded person. If disproportionately long it will mean different things according to the type of hand in which it may be found, or according to the type of that particular finger: in the first type, an over-long first finger would denote an inclination to the fantastic or the exaggerated in religious matters; or it might, perhaps, mean religious madness; or, if other signs in the hand favoured this view, it could be taken to denote pride. Pride is a form of worship—the cult of self. In the second type of hand, the excessive development of Jupiter might mean ambition, or, if it were in a hand that was eminently unselfish, it would stand for a something puritanical in manners and morals—a too great severity. In the third type, a very long first finger would probably signify vanity. The second finger is Saturn. If too prominent it announces melancholy, or misanthropy, or downright cruelty, according to the type of hand; but if the finger be within due proportions, this sadness may take the form of pity for others, or it may mean merely a becoming gravity. The third finger is Apollo, and belongs to the arts. In a "pointed" hand Apollo will give poetry and music (composition); in a "square" hand, painting, sculpture (here art leaves the domain of the purely contemplative; it becomes partly active from the combination of manual skill with what is only imaginative); and in a "spade-shaped" hand, Apollo will give histrionic power, an aptitude for acting, or a love of theatrical amusements. On the stage, art is joined in the closest manner to motion. The fourth finger is Mercury. If well proportioned it promises a scientific turn of mind,

resourcefulness, and diplomacy—tact. The thumb is Venus. Chiromony and palmistry agree in almost all particulars about the thumb. In both systems it is treated as the most important part of the hand. The upper joint, that with the nail, stands for the will ; the second division, the reasoning faculties ; the base, the animal instincts.

As far as he can do so, M. Desbarrolles strives to establish the analogy between the hand, as an instrument, and our spiritual nature. For instance, in the act of grasping anything, the fingers turn towards the thumb ; when giving anything the fingers and thumb separate ; and he says, when laid on any flat surface, a miser's hand will show all the fingers inclining towards the thumb, and an extravagant person's running away from it. It is noteworthy that we use the words "generosity" and "open-handedness" as synonymous. Again, a quarrelsome hand has nails that turn upwards ; a timid hand has nails that shield the extremities of the fingers. For the action of seizing with the nails the latter form would be useless, the former essential. Small lines have their significance, and sometimes a very great significance. A horizontal line on the mount of Mercury announces a marriage, if very deeply marked ; and an attachment, or a flirtation, if the line be less well defined. Lines at right angles with the marriage-line, round the corner of the hand—that is to say, on the flat surface made by the thickness of the hand, the edge of the hand just below the little finger—announce the number of a person's family : how many children they have, or will have.

There are two mounts opposite the thumb. That nearest the wrist is the Moon, giving imagination, an inclination to gentle reverie, and harmony in music (Venus gives love of melody) ; and Mars, immediately above the mount of the Moon. Mars is also represented by a hollow in the centre of the hand. The mount stands for active courage, or, if too strongly developed, for pugnacity ; and the hollow, if not too deep, indicates passive courage—patience, endurance. If all the lines are very bright, it denotes a hot-tempered person ; if of a deep red, a violent disposition ; and if very pale, a cold, selfish character. A soft, fat hand belongs almost invariably to an indolent person, and a hard, firm hand promises an active, energetic, persevering disposition.

Of M. Desbarrolles' theory it is hard to say anything laudatory, except that it is ingenious. His reasons why a given division of a finger, a mount, or a line, should represent some qualities, and not any others, appear obscure and unsatisfactory ; but we cannot allege any reasons for our reliance upon physiognomical signs and indications, yet we attach importance to them. We all accept a good countenance as a letter of recommendation in a stranger ; although we can hardly tell what constitutes its *goodness*, nor what the connection is between particular features, or a particular expression, and a likeable disposition. We may say that experience teaches us that they are

never met with apart ; that no bad man ever had a benevolent face, and no good man a malevolent. If this be a valid plea for physiognomy, then it ought to be equally so for palmistry ; for experience speaks, at least, as well for the latter as for the former. If it be given a fair trial, palmistry will prove itself a trustworthy guide in the study of character. When phrenology was brought forward, its advocates demanded that it should be put to the test of practice ; and thousands were willing to study it, and to attempt to make application of the art. It is not too much to hope that palmistry, which is better deserving of a trial, will be taken up and studied as phrenology was taken up and studied ;—that is to say, perseveringly, enthusiastically. It seems very arbitrary to say that the top joint of the thumb stands for a strong will ; and it is unsatisfactory to say this without being able to explain why it should be so ; but it is equally arbitrary to say that a large chin denotes obstinacy (and although no one tells us why this is, almost every one is ready to vouch for the accuracy of this physiognomical maxim), or to tell us that a certain development of the frontal bone near the eyebrow, indicates an orderly disposition ; but people very generally believe in “the bump of order.”

It requires some industry and courage to wade through M. Desbarrolles' chapters on “Man in connection with the Planets,” or “Kabbala,” and kindred topics, which have a strong flavour of what is called the “Black Art ;” and of what modern mystics tell us about the lore of the Alexandrian Platonists. There is a most unprepossessing air of special pleading running through the theoretical part of the book ; an unpleasant and (seemingly) an uncandid tone about it. The author prides himself on the empirical nature of his system, using the term as representing knowledge gained by experience ; but it is a temptation, when reading “The Mysteries of the Hand,” to apply “empirical” in its more common sense (quack) to his system. Few of those who peruse the book would ever think of chiromancy as other than an ingenious fiction, were it not for the surprising manner in which the art verifies itself when tested practically. Even the foregoing brief and incomplete sketch of it, will, if properly applied, enable people to guess very shrewdly at the tastes and pursuits of any strangers with whom they may happen to be thrown ; and a fragmentary acquaintance with palmistry places us in a position to afford ourselves and our neighbours a good deal of harmless amusement, while a more thorough knowledge of the subject would prove really useful. One of the chief merits of the art is the means it puts at our command for deciding on the disposition and capabilities of children, and of young people past childhood. Many mistakes now made with regard to education, technical and elementary, might be avoided by a careful study of a child's tastes and natural gifts.

E. LYNCH.

"OVER PHILISTIA WILL I TRIUMPH."

WASTE scum of an aspiring age,
Puffed with your own disgrace ;
Blest owners of a buttoned page
In glistening gilded lace ;
Poor frogs that ape with gasp and strain,
The burly oxen of the plain.

Just energy to hold your own,
To clutch the goods you prize ;
Just force to stare your neighbour down
With blank unpitying eyes ;
Just vital purpose to beget
The limp abstraction termed "your set."

"Your set,"—what passport should one bear ?
A captain's scarlet coat,
Or to some vagrant Irish peer
An ancestry remote ;
A bagman father's hard wrung gain,
An idle hand, a vacant brain :—

With these you weigh a neighbour's claim ;
With fuss and fume and strife
Secure he bears a sounding name
Or leads a useless life ;
So you may frankly hold him free
Of shoddy aristocracy.

I mock me of your feeble mirth,
Your fatuous dignity ;
The ancient name, the gentle birth,
My fathers left with me,
By Heaven ! I think I'd sell them both,
Like Esau, for a mess of broth,

Rather than mate with such as ye
Who clog the cumbered earth,—
Men shorn of man's integrity,
Women of woman's worth,

With venal lures to counterfeit
Their venal sisters of the street.

For me, I stand up face to face
 With Life's reality ;
From trammel of your silk and lace
 I shake my spirit free,
And own on all the clamorous earth
No higher rank than honest worth.

For me I work as best I may
 With hand and heart and brain,
Content to feel at shut of day
 I have not lived in vain—
Content to hear beyond the sun
The stedfast angels cry " Well-done ! "

M. L. HANKIN.

MEMOIRS OF A CYNIC.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CONTRASTS."

VII.

DURING the passage from England to Bombay the opinion I had formed of the estimable attributes of the East India Company's service gradually vanished, and before the ship again reached England, not only was my conclusion confirmed, but I held it to be impossible that any employment under the heavens could be more objectionable than the one I then followed. The captain of the ship, an elderly man, had certainly many admirable qualities, but unfortunately he was seized with dysentery in Bombay, and after a few days' illness died. The first officer succeeded to his post, and the officer of my watch, the one of whom I have so frequently spoken, was elevated to the position he had vacated. Our new captain was in every respect as great a brute as the man who now occupied the place of first officer, and midshipmen as well as men augured badly for the termination of our voyage.

No sooner had our poor captain been buried than a most detestable scene of brutality, profligacy, and drunkenness, mixed up with the caricature of naval discipline I have already mentioned, reigned on board without the slightest restriction. Flogging was of continual occurrence. If the registers of the old East India Company's ships were to be examined, it would frequently be found that the number of punishments with the cat-o'-nine-tails which took place on board one ship in a voyage of fifteen months were more than those in the whole British navy in the present time in the course of one year. Captain L——, one day in company with some other officers, boasted that he had, during a voyage of little more than a year, flogged every sailor on board his ship. His companions quoted an example of another captain whose discipline was still more admirable (?), who had not only flogged every man on board his ship, but several of them twice over. On board our own ship these punishments were frequently carried out for the most trifling offences.

One case I particularly remember of a poor fellow who, besides other punishments, had been flogged no less than nine times, and that in spite of the remonstrances of the two surgeons on board, who stated that he was suffering from kleptomania. The faults for which he was punished consisted in continually concealing, either in a bag or trunk, totally valueless objects, such as a piece of iron hoop, spun yarn, little bits of sail-cloth, an iron bolt, and other things of

the same kind, which could be of no value to him whatever, but which, unfortunately, came under the head of ship's stores, which are considered sacred at sea. The remonstrances of the surgeons were laughed at, and the captain, backed by the first officer, made, on the occasion of one of these punishments, a long speech, principally remarkable for its bad grammar, in which he stated that he considered it a moral duty to cure the misguided wretch of his pernicious habit. I afterwards heard that a young barrister on board the ship, a passenger from Bombay to Singapore, to which place we were bound, attempted to interfere, but had met with a sharp rebuke for his pains.

On one occasion the miserable man had been condemned to receive three dozen lashes for concealing some useless article, and the ship's crew were summoned to witness the punishment. The barrister at the time was on deck, and as the culprit took off his shirt an expression of horror came over his face at the sight of the still unhealed lashes the sailor had received some ten days before. He made no remark, however, and the flogging commenced, the poor sailor suffering dreadfully under the torture. As soon as it was over, and before being released from the grating to which he was fastened, the prisoner called out, "What a shame to treat a poor fellow in this manner ! It's infamous !"

The chief officer immediately turned to the captain, and said, "That man ought to have another dozen for his insulting behaviour."

"You are right," said the captain. "Boatswain's mate," he continued, "do your duty."

"Stop !" thundered the young barrister, now coming forward. "I protest against any further punishment being inflicted on that man. By the laws of England the cry of no man in pain is ever taken in evidence against him."

"By the laws of this ship it is different," said the captain. "You may make a very good judge on shore ; but let me advise you not to meddle with what does not concern you, or you will afterwards get into deeper trouble than you will easily get out of."

"I again protest against your continuing the punishment of that man," said the barrister, "on the plea you have given ; and as for your threat, I hold it in contempt. Now, hear one from me. In all probability at Singapore we shall find a ship of war, and if so, I will immediately apply to the Governor to request the captain to interfere, and let him take what steps he thinks proper. I say again, you ought to be ashamed of yourself for being as ignorant of the duties of your position as you appear to be. And you men," he continued, addressing the crew, "I shall call you forward as witnesses of the protest I have made to your captain." So saying, he left the deck, and entered his cabin.

Notwithstanding the insolent behaviour of the two bullies, the words of the barrister had evidently a great effect on them. They

seemed, however, for some moments puzzled what steps to take. At length the first officer, who was not without some cunning, advised the captain to call the surgeon, and ask whether the man could support the continuance of his punishment. The surgeon, only too happy to give the poor wretch the chance of escaping, pretended to feel his pulse, and then said,—

“In my opinion, sir, he cannot support, without danger, any further punishment.”

“Take him down,” said the captain.

The prisoner was then released, but suffered a similar punishment three weeks afterwards.

It would be very wrong to state that the sailors in the ship were either overworked or badly fed. In one respect perhaps they had too much indulgence allowed them, and that was in the quantity of rum served out to them. In some ships, especially in the navy, trifling faults were frequently punished by stoppage of a sailor's grog for periods varying from a day to a month. On board our own ship this was never the case, the rope's end, or cat-o'-nine-tails, was the only punishment used. Again, our captain was one of those who gloried in sending the holiday men from other ships, who visited our crew, back again in a state of helpless drunkenness; and when our own men visited on board other ships, if they had not to be hoisted on deck by a pulley, from their inability to stand, our captain would remark on the meanness of the entertainment they had received. Drunkenness was also carried on among the liberty men on shore to such an extent that it was no uncommon matter in Bombay to find streets, in which the grog shops were principally situated, with half a score of men on the ground, helpless with drink, and a prey to the harpies around them. But in addition to the vice of drunkenness permitted on board the ship, profligacy to an incredible extent was allowed, if not encouraged. On this subject a good deal might be said, but it would be unfit for these pages. Anything, however, more degrading to humanity than the scenes which took place on board our own ship, as well as others in the service, it would be difficult for the most perverted imagination to conceive. Nor were the men alone guilty; the behaviour of the majority of the officers was scarcely less creditable. Boy as I was at the time, I well remember the bitterly sarcastic feelings developed in my mind when contrasting the words of the sermon I had heard the Sunday before leaving England, respecting the manner in which the officers of ships belonging to our merchant princes created so favourable an idea of Christianity in the minds of the benighted heathen.

To continue my own narrative. Although not a word more was mentioned as to my conversation with Maria, the anger of the chief officer had evidently not subsided; indeed, it was perceptible in the continued annoyances and insults he offered me. I very much suspect

these insults were offered on purpose to provoke me to give an angry reply, so that he might punish me afterwards for my disrespectful conduct. If so, he thoroughly succeeded in his policy; and I believe if the records of the ship could still be found in the archives of the old East India Company, my name would appear disagreeably frequent in punishments awarded me for impertinence to commanding officers and disobedience of orders. I am sorry to say a good many of these punishments were deserved, but not by any means the whole number recorded against me. I am now fully convinced that his tyranny to me was purposely practised, as the following circumstance may prove, when I narrowly escaped severe punishment. I insert the anecdote the more willingly as it is only justice to the bully to admit that, with all his faults, he had certainly acquired while in the navy (for I believe no good quality was natural to him) a certain amount of respect for anyone possessed of courage.

One night, when in a hurricane in the China seas, he had the mid-night watch, I, of course, acting under him. Something, I forget what, was wrong on one of the quarters, and he ordered me to see to it. At that time the ship was rolling violently and rapidly, and the spanker-boom, which had got adrift, was sweeping alternately across the poop,* so as to render it exceedingly difficult to arrive at the quarter. I stood for a moment waiting for the boom to fall to the other side of the ship, so that I could pass to the quarter, when Mr. B—— came up to me.

"Why don't you obey my order, sir?" he said. "You're afraid, I suspect. You're nothing better than a coward, after all."

Stung to madness by this insult, I turned round and exclaimed,—

"You lie; I'm no coward;" and I accompanied my words with so well aimed a blow from the shoulder that he carried the marks on his face for a fortnight afterwards.

He immediately sent for the sergeant-at-arms, and ordered me to be placed under arrest,—not as an officer, confined to my cabin, but with my ankles fixed to an iron bar on deck which prevented my moving.

The next day the hurricane or typhoon had greatly subsided, and the crew were employed in making good the damage which had been done. On the third day I received notice that I was to be tried by a Court of Inquiry for mutiny and assaulting my superior officer. This intelligence gave me great uneasiness, as I remembered the threat the bully had made me, that he would have me, the first opportunity, broken, and sent before the mast. However, there was no alternative—I was a prisoner, and to be tried.

* For the information of my non-nautical readers, I may mention that the spanker-boom is the one which runs aft from the lower part of the misen-mast, horizontally over the poop of the ship.

I must say, when I entered the cabin and saw all the officers seated at a table, with the Gospel before the captain for the oath to be administered, the scene made considerable impression on me, and there was an appearance of solemnity about the whole affair I had not before witnessed in the ship, notwithstanding prayers used to be read every Sunday.

The first officer told his tale truthfully enough, as far as the bare facts were concerned. He acknowledged having called me a coward, as he suspected I was afraid to pass by the boom. "And if not," he added, "I submit he was still to blame for not obeying my order with more alacrity."

Two other witnesses swore to the same facts, and the master-at-arms, who held me in custody, testified to the insulting language I made use of to the first officer when arrested.

I was asked for my defence, and said I had none to make. It was perfectly true all that had been stated, I continued, and if I again received a similar offence I should act in the same manner.

"You are making bad worse," said the captain.

"I care not," I said, "what may be the consequence ; I say again, that the man who calls me a coward is a liar, and in whatever situation I may be, or at whatever risk, I will say the same thing. As for Mr. B——, I despise and defy him. He may do the worst he can, but whenever I meet him I will tell him the same thing." And here I attempted to draw myself up to my full height, and to wither my tormentor with an expression of indignant fury, but unfortunately at the moment I absurdly damaged the heroic effect I wished to produce by bursting into a boyish flood of tears. And this fact enraged me the more, as I feared he would think I was acting in an effeminate manner ; and so, by way of counteracting an effect of the kind, I made myself still more ridiculous by venting on him a torrent of insulting defiance, crying myself in the most stupid manner the while. The captain advised me to be quiet, and the master-at-arms, a rough old sailor, kept pushing me with his foot as a hint to hold my tongue. At length I obeyed, and stood sullenly by at the end of the table waiting for the captain to speak.

"If you have anything more to say, I am ready to hear you," he said ; "but from the language you have already used, if you take my advice you will say as little as possible."

"I have nothing more to say," I sulkily remarked.

I was then conducted out of the cabin in charge of the master-at-arms, while the court deliberated. The first officer, my accuser, left it as well. In about five minutes we were again sent for.

"The sentence of the Court," the captain said, "is that you be dis-rated, and sent before the mast as a common sailor, and that you receive in addition two dozen lashes for your mutinous conduct."

I can't say I was altogether surprised at this sentence. I made no

remark, and was on the point of being removed, when the chief officer, to my great surprise, said to the captain,—

“Allow me to say a word, sir. I don’t wish in any manner whatever to say anything that may appear to justify mutinous behaviour, as discipline ought always to be maintained at sea, but at the same time I must admit, judging from my own feelings, that the affront I offered, was, to the mind of any English sailor, an insupportable one. I, therefore, trust you will allow me to beg that the sentence be reconsidered and modified.”

I was again sent out of the cabin, while they deliberated over the request of the first officer, who this time remained with them.

When called in again, I was informed by the captain that in consequence of the earnest request of Mr. B., my sentence had been commuted. That I was to retain my position as midshipman, but that every hour from sunrise to sunset, I was to go to the maintop-gallant-mast head and report if anything were in sight. This I did for about three weeks, when we arrived at Canton, and my punishment terminated.

It would be tedious to describe further my personal adventures as midshipman in the East India Company’s service. Suffice it to say that shortly after our arrival at Canton, I caught an intermittent fever, which confined me to my hammock. So severe was it that for some time I remained equally poised between life and death, and had it not been for the kindness and skill of the assistant-surgeon, a little Scotchman, I should have succumbed to the attack. Thanks, however, to his attention, as well as the good feeling of my messmates, I managed to hang on during the many weeks which elapsed before the ship left Canton. Then the sea somewhat turned the balance in my favour, and I began slowly to recover, and before we had reached the Cape of Good Hope, I was nearly convalescent.

And now my tyrant again commenced his annoyance, offering me some petty insult every time he cast his eye on me. One day, when I was speaking to the head surgeon, he approached us, and asked the doctor why I did not return to my duty.

“Because I do not consider him sufficiently recovered,” replied the doctor.

“I consider he is only shamming, and dishonestly throwing on his messmates an unfair share of duty,” said Mr. B.

Here the doctor bridled up, and in very explicit terms told the first officer to mind his own business, that he had no authority over him, and that he would not be dictated to either by him or any other officer in the service.

“If you don’t speak to me with more respect,” said Mr. B., “you will find I am the stronger of the two here.”

“Try it when you please,” said the surgeon; “either here or on shore, and the sooner you begin the better.”

Although certainly a brave man, the bully thought he would rather not carry on the dispute with the doctor, and left us, telling him as he went that I was a shuffler, and too lazy to do duty.

I was so annoyed at this, that the same evening, without asking the consent of the surgeon, I went on duty. Mr. B. took no notice of me, nor did he speak one word during the whole of the watch. And here I found the surgeon had spoken but the bare truth when he said I was not strong enough to go on duty, for before the watch was half over, I was scarcely able to stand. I contrived to remain, however, during the whole of the time, but the result was that the next day I was unable to move. I recovered a little, and then a relapse of the fever came on, and I was again confined to my hammock, where I remained till the ship arrived at Gravesend.

As I was utterly useless on board the ship, the captain gave me permission to leave with the Scotch assistant-surgeon if I was able. To my surprise, Mr. B., the first officer, also advised me to leave, and that in the most friendly manner. At first I could not understand his behaviour, but during our passage up the river, the assistant-surgeon explained it to me.

"He knows perfectly well," he said, "that he is liable to an action for despotic conduct, and more than one case is on record in which juries have given damages in actions of the kind. If your uncle has your interest at heart, he will commence proceedings against him, and you may depend on the evidence of Dr. Thompson and myself."

My passage up the river was on a steamer, which had been, since I was last in England, plying regularly between Gravesend and Billingsgate. As we sailed along I could not help contrasting the different position I was then in to the day on which I joined my ship. I was not embarrassed with luggage on either occasion, but the cause was not the same. On my former journey my sea-chest had already been sent on board, filled to the lid with everything I could require; on my return home, I left my sea-chest on board from the simple fact that there was nothing in it worth carrying away. Everything I had possessed had been either lost, stolen, or destroyed, and the prodigal son on his return to his father could have been scarcely more destitute than myself. Again, the contrast in my appearance then, to what it was now, was equally striking. On the former occasion I presented the appearance of an erect, powerfully-built lad, with a complexion fair enough to have excited the envy of fully the average of young ladies of my own age. I was now debilitated to such an extent that I could hardly walk. My frame stooped, and my complexion was tanned to a deep brown by the elements, combined with the sickly hue of disease. I also remembered the adieux of the denizens of Billingsgate market when I left in all the pride of strength, and began to consider what sort of reception I should receive from them on my return. Bad as it was before, it would

doubtless be worse now. Here, however, I was decidedly in error. Though the market was scarcely less crowded than at the time of my departure, and those engaged in it by no means of a better class, not only was no disrespectful expression made use of, but all made room for me as I passed leaning on the little Scotchman's arm, and, judging from their countenances, many evidently sympathised with me on the state of my health. A miserable virago, who, if not the same with whom I commenced my quarrel on leaving England, might have been her twin sister, remarked to another of the same order as I passed, "Poor fellow, there isn't a fortnight's life in him. It's a pity to see a lad of his age so cut down, ain't it?"

Of course I made no remark, and we continued our road further on; but then I began to feel so faint, my companion had to take me to a druggist's shop to get me a restorative. He then asked the druggist if he could recommend us a quiet hotel, and fortunately he was able to tell us of one but a few paces off. Here I remained in bed for a couple of days while my friend the doctor paid some visits to his relatives in London. At the end of that time he asked what further assistance he could render me, as in the course of a few days he should be obliged to leave for Scotland.

My first idea was to send for my friend Burton, and the doctor went to his house, but on arriving there found that he and his parents had left London for the seaside, and they were not expected to return for another three months. It may possibly be thought that I ought first to have appealed to my uncle, but I did not do so from the fact that I felt exceedingly disgusted with him for the indifference he showed me when I left England. However, the contents of my purse were so small, that I had not sufficient money to pay my bill at the hotel, and, in spite of my own wishes, I was obliged to ask the doctor to call on my uncle. He did so, and fortunately found him at home. Nay more, he must have given a very serious description of my illness, for, to my great surprise, my uncle returned with him. He met me with (for him) great cordiality, and expressed his sorrow at the condition I was in. Although his words were kind enough, there was a certain coolness of manner about him, which seemed to tell he did not feel all he said. After talking with me for some time, he asked what money I had, and where was my luggage. I told him everything I had was either lost or destroyed, and that I should feel greatly obliged if he would supply me with some money. This he readily did, and then paid my bill at the hotel, and after presenting the little Scotch doctor with five sovereigns, he took me to his lodging.

The first day after my arrival at the lodging, my uncle was courteous and attentive enough; the second, a change took place, and he became more indifferent, and during the next three or four days I saw nothing of him whatever. I had too much pride to seek his society, and remained quietly in my room by myself. At the end of

a week my uncle told me he had secured a room for me in a highly respectable boarding-house at Hastings, where I could remain till my health was fully re-established, and then we could talk over my future plans.

I willingly agreed to this arrangement, and the next day started off for Hastings, not by any means sorry to leave my uncle's roof.

VIII.

I REMAINED at Hastings for more than two months. During the time I did not receive any news of my uncle, beyond his occasionally sending me money, and this was always done in a most formal manner. At last, comfortable as my life was at Hastings, I could not conceal from myself the fact that I was not justified in idling away my time any longer. I wrote therefore to my uncle to inform him of my wish to return, and talk over with him my plans for the future. I need hardly say that I had given up all idea of continuing longer in the Honourable East India Company's service, but what other profession to adopt I could not determine. I wavered between the army, medicine, and law, the two latter having far greater attractions for me than the former. Why I should have thought of medicine I hardly know, unless from the frequent conversations I used to have with the little Scotch doctor, who was an enthusiast in his profession. My liking for the bar arose from the fact of my having formed an acquaintance with a barrister, who, with his family of two sons and two daughters, had been living for some weeks in the boarding-house with me at Hastings. He had also given me a very pressing invitation to visit them when they arrived in London, which I not only accepted, but resolutely determined to keep. I may as well admit here that one of the barrister's daughters had particularly excited my admiration, but as I dare say the reader has had sufficient descriptions of my boyish loves, I will say nothing more on the subject.

My uncle, in his usual laconic manner, wrote word that I could return to London as soon as I pleased, and we could then decide what profession I should enter, as I had set myself irrevocably against commerce.

On the first day after my arrival in London, the subject was not mentioned between us, so I took the opportunity of calling on a friend of the Scotch doctor, to inquire when he would be in town, and to my great satisfaction found he had already returned, and was then at home. He received me in a most friendly manner, and appeared delighted with the improvement I had made in my health.

"And now," said the doctor at last, "what are you going to do? I suppose you have no wish to continue in the Honourable East India Company's service, or should you have any doubt on the subject, let me decide you, and that is never to enter it again.

There is not one in a thousand with constitution enough to have lived through the illness you have had, but were you to go back again to China, depend upon it you would stay there for ever."

I told him I had no intention to enter the service again in any manner, and that I was undecided whether to adopt law or medicine as a profession.

"Well then," he replied, "choose medicine. It is certain that our profession is generally a poor one, and that we have a great deal of hard work and little pay. After all perhaps law is not much better, for although there are in that profession men in receipt of better incomes than in the medical profession, the majority of its members hardly earn sufficient to find salt for their porridge, as we say in Scotland. As a doctor, however, a man is always able to find bread and cheese. Let matters come to the worst, he can always get a berth as surgeon on board a whaler, where he will have his five pounds a month, his food and a cabin. Besides that you will find far more beauties and attractions in our profession than you would in the law. Were a barrister called on to give one half of his exertions gratuitously, as we are, he would think it, and with reason, a great hardship, but I could give you instances of hundreds in our profession who work half of their time gratuitously, and feel a pleasure in doing so."

"All that is very true," I said. "But you see medicine leads to nothing more, after all. You are a doctor at the beginning, and a doctor at the end of your life; whereas in law, you may rise to the highest offices in the State, and become a member of the House of Peers. I believe in the medical profession it would be impossible to quote any one who has ever attained the dignity of being a member of the House of Commons."*

I remained in doubt some little time longer what profession to choose, my mind alternating between law and physic. Although I intend keeping to my determination not to trouble the reader further with the detail of any of my boyish loves, I must admit that I held the barrister's daughter in great admiration. She was certainly a very lady-like, pretty girl, and, what pleased me much, dressed, though neatly, in admirable taste. In fact, I noticed that dress was almost a passion with her, or rather, that she made a study of it. Nor were her criticisms and animadversions on the subject confined to her own sex, but she would occasionally express her opinion on the dress of gentlemen, who in the course of conversation were brought under her notice. This had the effect, to a certain extent, of making me more particular with my own. So much money, in fact, did I spend upon it, that my uncle, undemonstrative

* It should be understood that the conversation above alluded to took place some years prior to the passing of the first Reform Bill. Since that time several very talented members of the House of Commons have been medical men.

as he generally was, called my attention to the subject. Although his remarks had their weight with me, another circumstance increased their influence, and to such an extent as to drive all boyish foppery out of my head.

A day or two after my uncle's remonstrance I was engaged to join a pic-nic in the country, at which the barrister's daughter was to be one of the party. That I might do honour to it, I ordered a new suit of clothes expressly for the occasion. As some delay had occurred before I received my invitation, I had only three days to get the clothes made, and I was obliged to request my tailors, Messrs. Schweitzer and Co., of New Bond Street, to make a suit for me with all possible dispatch. Although they had my measure, I insisted on having it taken again so that there might be no mistake about the fit, which in those days was considered a very serious affair. Gentlemen's dress, instead of being, as it now is, loose and convenient, was made to fit exactly to the body, the arms and legs especially. It is related of that most religious and godly king, George IV., that he was so particular on the subject, that when he tried on a coat he would bend his arm, and a tailor's assistant, who stood by armed with a pair of scissors, would cut out all the wrinkles, and the parts were afterwards fine-drawn before his majesty would condescend to wear it. The orders I gave respecting my clothes, if not on the same plan were somewhat near it, so particular was I that they should fit in the tightest manner. They were brought home about half an hour before I had to start for the pic-nic. The suit consisted of a blue coat with embossed brass buttons, yellow waistcoat, and white duck trousers. The coat, and especially the sleeves, fitted to a miracle, and the white trousers were a master-piece, and so closely did they fit that I had some little difficulty in getting them on.

I now started off on foot to the house where a carriage was prepared for some of the party, my flame among them, to go to Hampton Court, the place appointed for the pic-nic. And here my misery began. So great was it, that although I was placed by her side in the carriage, I believe I never passed two hours of sharper torment. The trousers fitted so tightly, it was impossible to sit at ease in whatever position I might take. I tried to put on an air of graceful lassitude, and leant back in the carriage with my legs pushed forward to the fullest extent; but I could not disguise from myself that my figure was constrained in the extreme, and the perspiration pouring down my face. An elderly lady, who sat on the other side of the carriage, noticing my expression of countenance, more than once asked if I were unwell, and added to my confusion by the look of sympathy she gave me. When we left the carriage I received the condolence of several of the party; but once more in an erect position, my inconvenience considerably subsided. This, however, was brought out again with greater force than ever when lunch was

spread on the ground, and we were invited to take our seats on the grass. How to accomplish it I knew not. The only comfortable position I could find would be at full length. I tried all I could to sit down, but in vain. I then determined to play the polite and wait on the company; but stooping was painful to me. At last a spiteful young wretch, also an admirer of the barrister's daughter, discovered the cause of my uneasiness, and politely offered me a penknife to make incisions in my trousers, so as to enable me to sit down at ease, but I angrily declined his impertinent offer. I afterwards found that he had told the whole party in confidence the unpleasant position I was in, and the proposition he had made me, and I could notice a titter on their faces, especially the ladies, every time I came near them. The result was I got intensely angry, and at a convenient opportunity left the party, and strolling away by myself did not return to them again the whole of the day. I remained in the park till nightfall, and then quitted it and purchased a small pair of scissors at a shop in the town. At length, a fitting opportunity having offered, I followed my mischievous rival's advice, and made longitudinal gashes in different parts of my nether garments so as to allow me to be more at ease, and then, as I could not decently in my then condition appear in any public vehicle, I set off on foot for town, where I fortunately arrived before the break of day, so that my singular appearance was observed by no one.

On reflecting, the next morning, over the adventures of the previous day, I felt exceedingly galled at the idea of the ridiculous appearance I had made; and that, too, in the eyes of the individual on whom I wished to make the deepest impression. I never again visited at the barrister's house, and in fact dropped the acquaintance of the whole family. And this proves that I had but little predilection for the study of law, and that I only fancied myself attracted to it by the charms of the barrister's daughter.

Having relinquished all idea of pursuing the law as a profession, I had now to resolve whether to adopt that of medicine. Before definitely deciding on the subject, I determined again to consult my friend the little Scotch doctor. I informed him I had no intention now of adopting the legal profession, and wished to make up my mind fully whether I should adopt that of medicine. I felt strongly impelled, I said, to follow his advice, and wished him to give it me candidly.

"Well, my dear fellow," he said, after a minute's reflection, "I think you cannot do better. As I told you before, in the outset of our profession, especially where you are not backed with private means of your own, a young fellow has many difficulties to contend with, and not the least among them is the obligation to keep up a respectable appearance on very scanty means, though at the same time a living may always be gained provided an individual has a fair amount of professional knowledge and respectability of conduct.

I myself am a devotee to my profession, and would not change it for any other, although, God knows, I have had difficulties enough to contend with in the pursuit of it. I hold that there is something almost religious in the exercise of the medical profession, and no man who has once entered it, and afterwards quitted it, but has occasionally a hankering to return to it, if only to have an opportunity of exercising the doctrine of good works. My countryman, Mungo Park, by the way, was a singular proof of this. He worked hard as a doctor in a poor country district in Scotland. Occasionally, from hard work and little pay he began to feel discontented with his lot, and thought of quitting the profession and following some other. However, the practice continued to present great attractions to him, and he remained for more than a year undecided on the subject. At last one night, when he had retired to bed fatigued with a very heavy day's work, he had hardly fallen asleep when he was aroused by his old housekeeper, who informed him he was wanted to attend a poor woman labouring under the primitive curse, who resided some fifteen miles distant. Mungo Park had no alternative, and saddling his pony himself, he started off across the heath through a drifting fall of snow to the woman's house, fortunately in time to be of use to his poor patient. For this act he received as fee a piece of dry bread, and a cup of buttermilk, and then again mounting his pony he returned slowly to his own house. This was the ultimate cause of his determining to quit the medical profession. He resolved for the future to lead an easier life, and go in search of the source of the Nile,—then, be it understood, a far more difficult labour than in the present day. But his intention to quit the profession was useless, for it clung to him as irresistibly in the hot deserts of Africa as it had done on the bleak moors of Scotland. He could resist no application for medical assistance, and in spite of all his resolution to shake off physic, the love of it continued with him as ardent as ever till his death. And you, my boy," continued the Scotch doctor, "if you only get over the drudgery of the beginning, depend upon it the profession will have as many charms for you as for Mungo Park, and at present for myself."

The little doctor spoke with so much enthusiasm that I caught it myself, and determined to become a member of the medical profession. I inquired of him what steps I ought to take.

"I believe," he said, "the most common way is to put yourself as apprentice to some general practitioner, but I, for one, disapprove of the system. If you take my advice you will enter yourself as pupil in one of the hospitals, and also in the class of some anatomical and surgical teacher. You will thus obtain a far better knowledge of your profession than by mixing up drugs behind a counter, and instead of spending some years in that occupation, you may learn in a few weeks a very considerable amount of scientific knowledge, as

well as medical and surgical practice. Were I you, that is the course I should follow."

I told him I was much obliged to him for his advice, which I should certainly take, as I was fully aware my uncle would offer no objection. I then asked him what hospital, and what anatomical teacher's class I should enter.

"Had you been in Edinburgh," he replied, "I could have given you some good information on the subject, but I am not as well up in matters of the kind in London. Nay more, as the time has nearly arrived when I must again leave town, I shall not have leisure to make many inquiries with you about it. I know, however, Dr. Brooks, the great anatomist, who has classes in Marlborough Street. If you like we will go there now, and I will introduce you to him. He is a very good fellow, and will, I am sure, assist you in every way he can, and advise you which hospital you had better attend, so as to be able to gain the greatest amount of experience and knowledge."

I thanked him for his offer, and we started off for the dwelling of Dr. Brooks, whom we fortunately found at home. I can remember him well now as he came into the room into which we had been ushered. He was a little man, very neatly dressed in black, with knee-breeches and silk stockings, powdered hair, and white cravat. He listened to the description my Scotch friend gave of my qualifications and previous life, and the advice he had given me.

"I think you cannot do better," said Dr. Brooks, "than follow the advice of your friend. I shall be very happy to take you as a pupil in my class, and advise you for convenience sake to enter your name as pupil at the Middlesex Hospital; though, understand me, I by no means claim it as offering greater facilities for study than either St. George's or the Westminster."

I thanked Dr. Brooks for his advice, and told him I should certainly become his pupil, and inquired when I could enter.

"The course has just begun," he replied, "and you can enter at once if you please. But you must excuse me now, for I have an appointment I must keep, and am already behind time."

"As it is as well to be inured to the disagreeable part of the profession as soon as possible," said my Scotch friend, "have you any objection to my showing your new pupil the Museum and dissecting-room?"

"None in the world," said Dr. Brooks, laughing. "Pray make yourselves at home."

Dr. Brooks now left us, and I was conducted by my friend into the Museum, of which, although there were many curious objects, I understood but little. We then went into the dissecting-room. And here the difference of behaviour of my friend and myself was remarkable. He appeared struck with admiration at the sight which presented itself to our view; while I was struck motionless with horror.

There were in the room eight or ten tables, on each of which was spread, in most singular diversity of attitudes, a dead body, and at each one student at least was engaged, while at some of the tables there were two or three. Nor should the scene be compared with a dissecting-room in the present day, for at that time the Anatomy Bill had not been passed, and many of the bodies obtained for dissection had been buried for many months.

My Scotch friend, who had been engaged for some minutes in animated conversation with a gentleman at one of the tables, suddenly turned round, evidently to call my attention to something which especially interested him. Instead of doing so, however, he exclaimed,

"My dear fellow, how pale you are! Why, what is the matter with you?"

"I don't feel very well, and would rather go home," I replied.

He then led me from the room, and calling a hackney coach, conducted me to our lodgings, where he left me.

I shall never forget the horrors of that night. Sleeping or waking, something terrible presented itself to me. And here again, as usual, the absurd contrived to mix up in my mind with the terrible. In contrast with the ghastly scene I had witnessed in the dissecting-room, were the ridiculous adventures of a few days before at the pic-nic. I tossed incessantly on my bed during the whole of the night, which appeared interminable. Morning at last came, and I arose and dressed myself before any of the inmates of the house were awake. I managed to unbolt the doors myself, and wander into the street. And then the thought came across me that I would visit my Scotch friend, and seeing a hackney coach pass me, I hailed it, and told the coachman to drive me to the doctor's address. No one in the house was up, but I insisted on his arousing them. After some time he succeeded, and a half-dressed maid-servant opened the door. I entered the house, and told her to call my friend, and say I must see him immediately. Then going into the sitting-room to await him, the servant unfastened the shutters, and I remember her giving me a singular look as she left the room. I walked to and fro in it in an agitated manner, till my friend entered, when approaching him, I endeavoured to speak, but suddenly found I had forgotten everything I had to say. He looked at me inquisitively for a moment, and then taking my hand, felt my pulse.

"My dear fellow," he said, "you must go home. Stop a moment, I will go with you. I will be back directly," he continued, as he left the room for a few moments to complete his toilet, and he then entered the hackney coach with me.

From that day for many weeks afterwards, I have not the slightest knowledge of what had occurred, beyond that I had been stricken down by fever, and had remained delirious till the paroxysm was over.

(To be continued.)

THE DAUGHTERS OF EVE AND THE POET OF "PARADISE LOST."

IN connection with the third volume of Mr. Masson's noble *Life of Milton*, much comment has lately been made by journalists and essayists upon the poet's estimate of women and his manner of dealing with them in his great treatises on Divorce. The major part of this comment is but remotely and obliquely known to me; much of it not known to me at all (for I have for a couple of years seen but little of the periodicals and newspapers), but a little of it I have carefully read; and I do not hesitate to inform the reader at once that what the reviews, so far as I have looked into them, have told him concerning the Divorce treatises is, in a most essential particular, entirely false. This is throwing a point-blank contradiction in the face of writers who ought to have known what they were saying before they spoke; but it will be seen that I am not speaking without book, and that flat contradiction is just what the case demands.

It would be very easy to draw a wide general moral from the fact that such misstatements as I am about to refer to occur in these reading days, and upon a very simple point indeed; but I, for one (if the reader cares to know) may say that I am tired of drawing such morals in these matters. Reviewing literature is absolutely crowded with erroneous criticising which a very little care would avoid; and there was a time, not so long ago, when I used to make myself ill over them, though they were no concern of mine, except as it is every man's concern that justice should be done, and that truth should be told. But I have now settled down in a dreary, if wholesome, sense of the utter hopelessness of getting even intelligent and kindly people to be careful of what they write about other people's writing; and I was not in the least surprised to find reviewer after reviewer upon a false scent in speaking of the treatises in question. Not surprised, I say, though the error committed has all the effect of slander and worse. Much worse; for if Milton had been capable of the injustice which has been laid at his door, it would have been one more fact—and Heaven knows we don't want more of them—to lower our faith in human nature and our hopes of its earthly destiny.

As Milton was the poet with whom in my childhood I was chiefly acquainted, and as what he wrote about women in his poetry was almost all I knew of such writing (outside of the Bible), what I have to say about him in this matter may not unnaturally be allowed

to connect itself with a few reminiscences of my own feelings as a boy towards women and girls. To these we will pass on, after we have done with Milton—if the reader will kindly pardon the bathos.

The question of Milton's general estimate of women is an exceedingly simple one. That estimate was exactly what was natural under the circumstances, quite apart from his special experience as a husband; and it had the sanction of the sacred writings of the Hebrews at every point at which such sanction was possible. It is inconceivable that an honest Puritan, with much muscle in his brain, could think otherwise of women than Milton did. Of late years we have seen scandalously insincere attempts to water away the plain meaning and still plainer suggestion or *aura* of what is said in the Old and New Testament about women. But if a man really manages to get out of the Bible any doctrine about woman, except that she is man's inferior; man's tempter; man's subordinated helper; under a special curse for the fault of Eve; and under a special ban, ceremonial ban too—then I say he is either dishonest or wanting in mental fibre. Subtle and beautiful natures, but afflicted with logical rickets or flabbiness, must be excused for getting just what pleases them out of the records (especially as what pleases them is often extremely beautiful); and dishonest minds will always do what they choose—there is no law for *them*. But the plain truth is, that Milton's estimate of average womanhood did not differ by a hair's breadth from what a Puritan's estimate of women was bound to be. If his own marital experience had been different to start with, his language might have been less harsh than it sometimes seems to modern eyes; but, after all, should we have considered it harsh if we had not known his private history? The answer is not clear. We must take into account that in writing of women as the spirit of his time and as all his most revered authorities fully justified him in doing, he must have well known what he was about, if ever man knew his own business. Milton, living when he did, was perhaps nearer to illustrious examples of female learning and accomplishment than we are. He must have known all that was to be known of Lady Jane Grey and certain distinguished Italian ladies, and have formed his estimate of women in the teeth of that knowledge. It has been said that his Eve is a Puritan housewife, and there is just enough truth in that to give it a sting; but, in truth, his

"Daughter of God and man, accomplished Eve,"

is much more than that, and it was not for nothing that so great a man—with a mind that opened so freely towards Mysticism, as was afterwards seen—made Heaven and Earth consent in the beauty and rapture of her espousals. True, a poet could not do otherwise; but Milton has done it with a will. Often did I, as a child, hear the eighth book of the "Paradise" condemned by

Puritan friends, because there was so much of "the flesh" in it. "But this," as Sterne says, "is a vile translation:" and nobody can forget what Milton says, in answer to the accusing angel, who is quite as much like Cotton Mather as Eve is like Mrs. Governor Winthrop. We must bear in mind, by-the-by, that the word "decency" is as much lowered in its signification since Milton's days, as the word "accomplished;" and he tells the reverend gentleman—I beg pardon, the "angel guest familiar"—that it was not Eve's "outside formed so fair," (Eve had left the bower for a while), that enchanted him so much as

"Those thousand decencies that daily flow,
From all her words and actions mixed with love."

And what woman wants a poet to say anything sweeter of her than this:—

"Yet when I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best:
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded; wisdom in discourse with her
Loose discountenanced, and like folly shows;
Authority and reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally; and to consummate all,
Greatness of mind, and nobleness, their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic placed."

Apart from Eve, who had to be put into the poem somehow, and was invented when the poet was elderly, Milton's Woman is just what we might expect in a Puritan young man of severe training, much love of music, and much susceptibility to Italian culture. Wordsworth's Woman, it has been said, is the Mother. Milton's, we may say, was the classic Virgin, just sprinkled at the mediæval font, and inspired by Milton with his own faith in the supreme victory of goodness.

The charge which I have lately seen made against Milton, over and over again, so that tens of thousands of readers must have seen it, is that, in his Divorce treatises, he has maintained the right of the man (under what he believed to be an unrepealed Mosaic statute) to repudiate his wife, and has not allowed *any* such right to the woman. This charge is not only false, it is stupid; as I shall very summarily prove.

Hear the poet himself:—"Lastly: if divorce were granted, as Beza and others say, not for men, but to release afflicted wives, certainly, it is not only a dispensation, but a most merciful law. And *why it should not yet be in force, being wholly as needful*, I know

not what can be the cause but senseless cruelty." This passage does not claim the right for women, but it claims it in the interest of women, and it occurs in the fifteenth chapter of the first treatise.

Again, in chapter nineteen :—"St. Paul enlarges the seeming construction of those places in the gospel, by adding a case wherein a person deserted, which is something less than divorced, may lawfully marry again. And having declared his opinion in one case, he leaves a *further liberty* for christian prudence, to determine in cases of *like importance*, using words, so plain as not to be shifted off, that a brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases." This is much stronger, and is indeed sufficient. Nor should any reader fail to note how careful Milton often is, in constructing his sentences, to use words that cover the rights of both husband and wife.

Again, in the last chapter of the same book, Milton tells the parliament that if they make divorce or voluntary separation (with leave to marry again) lawful, "they shall set free many *daughters* of Israel, not wanting much of her sad plight whom Satan had bound eighteen years."

Again, in "Tetrachordon" :—"The wife is not still bound to be the vassal of him who is the bond-slave of Satan ; she being now neither the image nor glory of such a person, *nor made for him, nor left in bondage to him.*"

Again : "Where the yoke is misyoked—to the grievance and manifest endangering of a brother or sister, reasons of a higher strain than matrimonial bear away."

Again : "Who [though] of weakest insight, may not see that this creating of them male and female," [though subjecting the woman to the man] "cannot in any order of reason or christianity be of such moment against the better and higher purposes of their creation as to enthrall *either husband or wife* to duties or sufferings unworthy and unbecoming the image of God in *them* ? Now, whereas not only men, but good men, do stand upon their right, their estimation, their dignity, in all other actions and deportments, with warrant enough and good conscience, as having the image of God in them, it will not be difficult to determine what is unworthy and unseemly for a man to do or suffer in wedlock : *and the like proportionally may be found for woman, if we love not to stand disputing below the principles of humanity.* He that said, 'Male and female created he them,' immediately before that, said also in the same verse, 'in the image of God created he him,' and redoubled it, *that our thoughts might not be so full of dregs as to urge this poor consideration of male and female, without remembering the nobleness of that former repetition.*"

Again :—"The law is to tender the liberty and human dignity of them that live under the law, whether it be the man's right above the woman," [as the domestic superior] "or the woman's just appeal against wrong and servitude, but the duties of marriage contain in

them a duty of benevolence, which to do by compulsion against the soul where there can be neither peace, nor joy, nor love, but an enthrallment to one" [no sex mentioned] "who either cannot or will not be mutual in the godliest and the civilest ends of that society, is the ignoblest and the lowest slavery that a human shape can be put to; this law, therefore, justly and piously provides against such an unmanly task of bondage as this." [And] "although there be nothing in the plain words of this law that seems to regard the afflictions of a wife, how great soever; yet expositors determine, and doubtless determine rightly, that God was not uncompassionate of them also in the framing of this law. . . . Should God, who in his law is good to injured servants, by granting them their freedom in divers cases, not consider the *wrongs and miseries of a wife*, which is no servant, though . . . to [her] *by name* he gives no power at all?"

Again:—"This law [is] not unmindful of the wife, as was granted willingly, . . . though beyond the letter of this law, yet not beyond the spirit of charity."

Again:—"Marriage, to be a true and pious marriage, is not in the single power of any person" [no sex mentioned]; "the essence thereof . . . is in relation to another, the making and maintaining causes thereof are all mutual. . . . If then *either of them* cannot, or will not, be answerable in these duties . . . the true bond of marriage, if there were ever any there, is already burst like a rotten thread . . . [God] therefore, doth in this law," &c., &c., &c.

Again, in the comment on 1 Cor. vii.:—"I argue that [either] *man or wife* who [is] not able or not willing to perform what the main ends of marriage demand, is," &c., &c., &c. "The blameless *person*" [no sex mentioned], "therefore, has as good a plea to sue out his delivery from this bondage as from the desertion of an infidel"—the pronoun "his" being here used under a well-known grammatical law.

In referring to the practice of the ancient church, Milton over and over again argues from cases in which the wife was permitted by the church to repudiate the husband. And one of the reasons why I have called these blunders stupid is, that it would obviously have been impossible for Milton to weave the seventh of Corinthians into his Tetrachordon, or four-fold cord, without giving the wife similar rights to those of the husband.

Again:—Milton quotes from the laws of Theodosius and Valentinian, as follows:—"As we forbid the dissolving of marriage without just cause, so we desire that a husband *or wife* distressed by some adverse necessity should be freed by an unhappy yet necessary relief." And after making this quotation, Milton says: "*What drachm of wisdom or religion (or, for charity is the truest religion) could there be in that knowing age which is not virtually summed up in this most just law?* . . . Those other Christian emperors . . . altered the [Roman] law,

sex, according as the Gospel seems to make the wife more equal to her husband in these conjugal respects than the law of man doth. Therefore, if a man was absent from his wife four years, and in that space not heard of, though gone to war in the service of the emperor, she might divorce and marry another by the edict of Constantine." And this, Milton goes on to say, giving us his opinion of such a law in an oblique form, "was an age of the church both ancient, and cried up still for the most flourishing in knowledge and pious government since the apostles."

I might make the case for Milton much stronger still by noticing the rapid (often *exceedingly* rapid) implications of his writing; and by drawing out into detail, *suggested* by these implications, his general doctrine, passionately stated even in the first treatise, that God "hath left all his commandments under the feet of charity." Much, also, might be justly inferred in his favour from the finely apprehensive and often pathetic terms in which he speaks of love and marriage. But it is not necessary. I have proved that in his total teaching on this subject Milton was not unmindful of the woman's side of the question; and I could go on to prove, if there were space, that he stands committed in her behalf to issues as broad as any that Mr. Mill himself could draw out in this respect. I am not here now to criticize the doctrine in these matters; I am simply defending him from charges of unreasonableness and injustice, and it is important on every ground that the truth should be known. I say he was neither unreasonable nor unjust in the sense attributed to him, and it would have been an almost incredible shame and scandal if he had been so.

I now approach Mr. Masson's book with the deepest respect and admiration for its author. His account of these Divorce tracts appears to me such as *must* leave a wrong impression upon the reader, and in other respects I do not follow him. Mr. Masson admits, but only in one place and in terms which do not go far, that in the later treatises, Milton "occasionally leaves the man's point of view, and tries to be considerate about the woman." Whether this admission covers, or anything like covers, my extracts, let the reader judge. But Mr. Masson tells us of the first treatise—what reviewers have unguardedly extended to the whole literature—just this:—

"My last remark is that Milton, in his tract, writes wholly from the man's point of view, and in the man's interest, with a strange oblivion of the woman's. The tract is wholly a plea for the right of a man to give his wife a bill of divorcement and send her home to her father. There is no distinct word about any counterpart right for a woman who has married an unsuitable husband, to give him a bill of divorcement and send him back to his mother. On the whole subject

of the woman's interests in the affair Milton is suspiciously silent." Well, even this is not, as my first extracts show, a defensible statement. Mr. Masson has evidently read chapter xii. of the first book, for he quotes from it; but just let us attend to it more closely. The heading of the chapter is as follows:—

"It is probable, or rather certain, that every one who happens to marry, hath not the calling; and, therefore, upon unfitness found and considered, force ought not to be used."

There is not a word about sex here, and Milton was not so dull as not to see that he could not make good logic of his case if he attempted to limit the outcome of this principle to the man's side. The chapter itself is still clearer:—

"It is most sure that some . . . are destitute of . . . marriageable gifts, and consequently have not the calling to marry. . . . Yet it is as sure that many such, not of their own desire, but by the persuasion of friends, or not knowing themselves, do often enter into wedlock; where, finding the difference at length between the duties of a married life, and the gifts of a single life, what unfitness of mind, what wearisomeness, scruples and doubts, to an incredible offence and displeasure, are like to follow between, may be soon imagined; whom thus to shut up and immure, and shut up together, the one with a mischosen mate, the other in a mistaken calling, is not a course that Christian wisdom and tenderness ought to use. *As for a custom that some parents and guardians have of forcing marriages, it will be better to say nothing of such a savage inhumanity, but only this, that the law which gives not all freedom of divorce to any creature, endued with reason, so assassinated, is next in cruelty.*"

Now "any creature endued with reason" is a phrase that most clearly includes women, and as women are more frequently forced to marry against their will than men, the passage must refer mainly to their case. But, more, far more than this,—was Milton so dull as not to perceive that all this carried with it obvious consequences in favour of women, and some of these consequences stronger than any it carried on behalf of men? I certainly do not believe it; no, not for a moment. The poor man is "not such a fool as he looks."

Once more. This short, but pregnant chapter may suggest to any one who does not see it at once, why the man's right came first, and remained paramount in the mind of Milton. Notice the phrases,—*"the one with a mischosen mate, the other with a mistaken calling."* Now Milton could not very well have written otherwise than this, holding the opinions which, in other respects, he did hold. To this day, indeed, most people hold that, the initiative in marriage being the man's, the first choice being his, certain social consequences follow which women do not consider very favourable to them. How could Milton do other than hold that if there was any right of rejection at all it lay first with the one who initiated the contract and

here. One of my extracts from the first treatise Mr. Masson quotes, following it up further, and quoting some harshly-sounding words of the poet's ; but this criticism is, in my opinion, unjust. We must remember that Milton was a very plain speaker, always ; there was often what a French idiom would call a *brutality* about his language, but it only came of his having a small organ of Secretiveness. And, if you had taxed him on these matters, he would have replied, "Nature has made certain differences which involve these results. Those differences are facts—what would you have?"

In other respects Mr. Masson is not as *positively* fair as he meant to be. It is hardly sufficient to observe that in the first treatises Milton omitted all reference to the children and other practical matters, unless you add (which is *not* added) that he deals with them afterwards. Nor is it, I think, true to say that "Tetrachordon" is a dull pamphlet ; nor to say, as Professor Seeley once did, that Milton's arguments are out of date. The author of "Friends in Council" does not think so (see "Companions of my Solitude") ; and readers of the *Contemporary Review* will remember an article by the late Professor Conington, in which that gentleman, criticising Dr. Liddon, hammered away for several pages at the difficulty in making sense of certain texts in the Gospels ; just as Milton did, only he did not come to Milton's conclusion, that the words attributed to the Founder of Christianity are grammatically irreconcilable with any conceivable view of what his meaning must have been.

This brings us to Mr. Peter Bayne, whose otherwise fine article in the above-named *Review* for August last is open to a good deal of adverse comment as to this question. It represents Milton as utterly and harshly unmindful of the woman's case—which we have seen is not true. But Mr. Bayne falls into a trap which Milton's contemporaries did not escape, and into which Mr. Masson and others have followed them. Mr. Bayne says :—

"Of all, except the high intellectual and moral ends of marriage, Milton is loftily disdainful. He assigns to married love all those spiritual joys which seem, as such, to pertain rather to friendship ; and the man who cannot love his wife as the sister of his spirit, is permitted, nay, is bound, to give her a bill of divorcement and send her away."

When I happen to read anything so wildly wide of the mark as this is (in my opinion), I feel as if it would be a great relief to be lapped in a short fainting-fit—till the first shock had gone off. The fact is, the critics are all misled by Milton's language about a "fit conversing soul," "a mute and spiritless mate," "due conversation," and the like. But surely they might have noticed other hints which are nearly as frequent and quite as strongly worded. Do they one and

all remember nothing about the "jolliest" things in the "Song of Solomon"? about marriage being the "mystery of joy"? Cannot they remember who wrote the words, "Here lights his purple lamp, here reigns and revels"? Must they needs overlook passage after passage of the most striking kind in the treatises, passages which plainly show that Milton was anything but "disdainful" in Mr. Bayne's sense, and that the iron had gone deep in more ways than one with him? Cannot they remember that he was admittedly a man of great physical energy, eager in his educational schemes for the full culture of the body, proud, in his own haughty way, of his personal beauty and force; and a man who, to use his own words, having lived strictly in youth, had made haste to light the nuptial torch? Do the critics imagine that because Mary Powell was a Royalist, *she* would be the one that would see the beauty of "the purple lamp," and understand "the mystery of joy," and that because Milton was a Puritan he behaved like Mr. Casaubon? Apparently some of them do; at least Mr. Bayne says that Dorothea Brooke and Milton might have made a fitting match; and one of Milton's contemporaries suggested that what he wanted was a wife who could talk to him in Greek. But the secret lies deeper than all this. It is but too plain that his first experience in marriage came to him as a slap in the face (—I speak in metaphor, *not* meaning that Mary Powell hit him—), and that the phrase "mute and spiritless mate" means much more than a mate who couldn't talk Greek. In "Middlemarch" there is a story of a French girl who stabbed her husband because his fondness bored her. Milton would not have cared for Mary Powell's want of Greek (which he must have known before marrying her) if he had not found that his fondness bored her. He does not use the phrase "an image of phlegm" for nothing. It is idle to say, as Mr. Bayne does, that the fault was Milton's. There was no "fault," so far as we can see, on either side. There was a mistake—and the misery was for both. As far as knowledge of the world goes, there is every probability that Mary Powell had a great deal more of it than Milton; and all we can gather about her leads to the presumption that she suffered only, or chiefly, as a worldly-minded woman suffers who knows nothing of the "mystery of joy" in marriage, or any other mystery of joy, but was pretty much like Rosamond Lydgate,—could flourish, like other basil-plants, on murdered lovers' brains, and would talk of "my husband," and her rights in "my husband," just as if he were "my tea-tray" or "my ribbons." To plead for pity for her, as Mr. Masson and Mr. Bayne do, is quite unnecessary, I was going to say false—and half-consciously false—gallantry. ~~She is pitied~~—abundantly pitied,—and her side of the story has been carefully idealized. All the critics must know that the real honest difficulty in the case is to make any headway *on behalf of Milton*. The first impulse, and a very strong and right impulse too, of every man is to take the woman's part; and

beings are as incapable as poor Mary Powell of the "mystery of joy;" and neither men nor women in general could be got by a forty-Milton power of eloquence to understand that with him it would not be a question of "taking part" with one side or the other, or of quarrelling or making up a quarrel. I have not the shadow of the shade of the ghost of the phantasm of a doubt that in receiving Mary Powell back, after the two years of separation, Milton acted against the deepest suggestions of his own instincts; and that if there had been any means of thumbscrewing out of him, later on, his most secret thought, it would have been, "I have done an ill thing both for this woman and myself."

That is my rendering of the story—and the reader will please once more to observe that I am not now going about to express general opinions. I will, however express *this* opinion—that after a man has once been guilty of an act of falsehood to his own strongest convictions of the truth of things—such as I conceive Milton to have been guilty of in receiving back Mary Powell (for reasons of kindness and family convenience), all the subsequent procedure of his mind will be specially liable to be flawed with insincerity. I am not saying here that Milton was right in his convictions; all I maintain is, that in the so-called reconciliation (*ah, la belle réconciliation !*) he smothered the deepest of them. *He did.* And in so doing he parted for ever with what he had up to that moment held—the turquoise that turns yellow at the approach of a lie.

During many years of my early life, Milton was the only poet of whom I knew anything in the volume form—and I had not the whole even of him. I think the perfection of his "numbers" must have had its effect upon me; but what chiefly moved me in his writings was the perpetually recurring echo of that one note, in "Comus,"

"Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt ;"

and among the very first lines that ever I got by heart were these six:—

"Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue—she alone is free !
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime ;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her !"

Apart from all "condescending upon particulars," as the Scotch say, to read Milton but a little was to be, so far, in an atmosphere of intense and almost strained ideality. There is something else. As a Doctrine of Reverence towards God, Justice and Kindness towards men, and Celestial Fellowship among the good, Christianity had a


see that this now would have been still weaker but for Milton. This Christianized classicism, or classicized Christianity, was the go-between or intermediate influence which made my mental history as nearly sane as it could be under the circumstances. Say not that a little boy could not enter into such matters—our lives are largely influenced by things that we don't enter into at the time. At all events, I lived day and night in an atmosphere of idealisms of the most passionate kind. I say night advisedly, for when I was nine or ten years old, I used to go to bed early that I might revel with my head under the clothes in visions—

"Planets, suns, and adamantine spheres,
Wheeling unshaken through the void immense ;"

(—to prevent mistakes, please observe that this is Akenside, not Milton—) and—beautiful women. These were to me simply so much beauty ; but—and it is a mighty *but*—the beauty used to make me ill. On one occasion a pretty young woman—a dress-maker she was, who afterwards married a "reformed" rake, had rickety children, and shamefully neglected them—was spending the evening with my mother, in expectation of seeing her sweetheart, who was my father's lodger. She wore a very low dress, and her beautiful bust disturbed me so, that, though it was a frosty night, I could not stay in the room, and went out with my heart in my mouth. The fact is—now be sure you laugh at this!—I could not speak when spoken to for palpitation of the heart, so I went out for shame ; and a very bad cold I caught, to the very great anger of my tender mother.

This liability to incredible excitement from even the thought of lovely womanhood—the sons of Belial will please suspend their laughter—continued for years afterwards,—I was then nine. At thirteen I went to my first *regular* situation. I had not been four hours in the lawyer's office, where I was "fag," before the sons of Belial there were doing their best to corrupt me ; but they could tell me nothing that I did not know. A short time before, a stranger had offered to my mother, at wastepaper price, three odd volumes of Ephraim Chambers's old Cyclopædia. The plates were complete ; and I very soon made myself master of all the book had to say upon some topics as to which I had up to that date remained in total ignorance, without making, or attempting to make, even a guess. I was, therefore, more than a match for these genteel ruffians. But I may say that the effect upon my mind of the knowledge I acquired was almost overwhelming ; I was *bouleversé* ; there is no word for it. Only to my previous feelings towards women was now added an amount of pity that used to seem more than I could bear.

Shortly after this, I became ill in a queer, languid way, and had to



When I was about to return to my situation, my father—as the reader will say most properly, kindly, and wisely—gave me a little lecture of caution and dissuasion about bad company, and the vices into which “youths” so often fall. I interrupted him several times, saying eagerly and even violently that whatever other “youths” wanted (my father was fond of the word “youths”) such advice was not wanted by me. Everybody will understand that this made matters worse, and that the fatherly lecture grew all the more serious. The end was, for the moment, a passion of tears on my part, and—I had better go on frankly with my tale—a threat to leave the house that night, even if I slept in the streets. Of course my mother interfered, and for a time the matter rested; but the wound did not heal, and eventually I did go and engage lodgings for myself away from home.

Of this I will now say no more. But I must go on to add that though there was never any unkindness between my father and me, and though I was—here again I had better be frank—a dutiful son in ways which need not be mentioned, that wound *never* healed; at least there was always a gulf, or rather the mutual suspicion of a gulf, between my father and me. I felt it desperately hard to be no better understood, than all that came to; and in that episode, which ended with the crying fit, began a feud between me and the world, which has lasted to this hour, and still looks lively. And here is the essence of the feud. Although the faith of the Lady in Milton's “Comus” was mine, I never could understand why, for *that* reason, the ascetic or puritan line should be drawn between “the spirit” and “the flesh” (to use unwillingly words hateful to me, and as I believe disastrous in their use by others). I never was conscious of any reason for such a line, and always abhorred the idea of it. Robertson of Brighton has left on record a short account of his feelings towards women when very young:—

“The beings that floated before me, robed in vestures more delicate than mine, were beings of another order. The thought of one of them becoming mine was not rapture, but pain. . . . At seven years old woman was a sacred dream, of which I would not talk. Marriage was degradation. I remember being angry on hearing it said of a lovely Swede—the loveliest being I ever saw—that she was likely to get married in England. She gave me her hair, lines, books, and I worshipped her only as I should have done a living rainbow; with no further feeling. Yet I was then eighteen, and she was to me for years nothing more than a calm, clear, untroubled fiord of beauty, glassing heaven deep, deep below, so deep that I never dreamed of an attempt to reach the heaven. . . . It is feelings such as these—call them romantic if you will—which I know, from personal experience, can

every shape and form."

Now, these feelings were mine (and they still are mine), with this exception, that I should never have flinched from the idea of a beautiful woman's getting married. My feelings towards his "lovely Swede," if I had known her, would have had no thought of marriage in them, but they would have been passionate, though I am sure as full of awe as his, and there would have been no revulsion from the idea of marriage in them. Nor can I understand such a revulsion—though I can quite understand the idea being in total abeyance even (yet why *even?*) in the case of the most intense love between a human couple. And I find on reflection that I have always had towards women—or rather towards woman—emotions of rapture which will not coalesce, or at least which never do seem to coalesce, with such fancies as that of Robertson's about marriage being a profanation. Some such idea seems to run through whole literatures, and to belong to whole races of men and women; but I never had a film of it. You may find it in a diluted form even in Mr. Lecky—indeed you may find it almost everywhere;—I have been knocking my shins against it all my life—I mean against the spirit-and-flesh prejudice. Robertson's account of his own youthful feelings in these matters will stand exactly for mine if you will only add another feeling, which, again, naturally associates itself with emotions of impersonal rapture—such as we must go elsewhere for:—

"These thou shall not take,

The laurel, the palms, and the pæan, the breast of the nymphs in the brake;
Breasts more soft than a dove's, that tremble with tenderer breath;
And all the wings of the Loves, and all the joy before death,
All the feet of the hours that sound as a single lyre,
Dropped and deep in the flowers, with strings that flicker like fire. . . .
More than these wilt thou give, things fairer than all these things?"

(And Aphrodite was)—

"A blossom of flowering seas,

Clothed round with the world's desire as with raiment, and fair as the foam,
And fleetier than kindled fire, and a goddess.
Her deep hair heavily laden with odour and colour of flowers,
White rose of the rose-white water, a silver splendour, a flame
Bent down unto us that besought her, and earth grew sweet with her name. . .
Flushed from the full-flushed wave, and imperial, her foot on the sea;
And the wonderful waters knew her, the winds and the viewless ways,
And the roses grew rosier, and bluer the sea-blue stream of the bays."

Now, where is the good, where is the sense of calling this Pagan?
You might call it Abracadabrisms, and what then? It would follow that I was an Abracadabran, and yet I was a pure worshipper of woman. Though friendly with at least one morally heterodox person, I would not hold any intercourse with a drunkard, or a loose liver in

would let him, Milton was—*pace* Mr. Peter Bayne, who is, I maintain, wholly abroad upon this question—an Abracadabran also. Only a very bad Abracadabran could have written the eighth book of “Paradise Lost,” or the song of Comus himself. . . . Suppose I were to say, “I care nothing for life and the world around without God and Immortality,” would that imply that I was “disdainful” of the beauty and glory of life and nature? Not it. It would still be true that the beauty and glory of life and nature seem to me to *demand* these ideas in the background. Without them, the beauty and glory are as a painted transparency with no light behind it—a thing no one cares twopence for. Just in that vein did Milton write with fury of his demand in marriage for “a fit conversing soul,” and his horror of “a mute and spiritless mate.” To use language which I repudiate, but which he would not have objected to (living in those days; I believe he would *now*), all his high-flown phrases about this “fit conversing soul” and his trampling down of other matters meant just this:—“The spirit without the flesh is endurable; the flesh without the spirit I will not have on any terms; at least not by legal compulsion.” For it must be remembered in justice to Milton, that he everywhere implies what he also expressly says,—“If any man *counsel* me to bear this cross, I listen to him as an angel from heaven; but if he would *compel* me, I know him for Satan.”

Since the foregoing was in type, I am told that two recent reviews have stated opinions of the nature of Milton's trouble which are on the same track as my own. (—though stronger, and indeed *too* strong). It must be borne in mind that Mr. Masson thinks it almost proved that the first treatise was written while Mrs. Milton was actually under his roof. In a quarter from which we usually get much better things, one of these reviews is now accused of borrowing the notion from the other, and both are put out of court on the very ground I have ridiculed,—namely, that Mary Powell was young and a Royalist! The idea that because a girl is the belle of a ball-room she cannot also be Milton's “image of earth and phlegm” is one of those absurdities which remind us of the thick coatings of ignorance and inapprehensiveness through which the truth in these matters has got to *bullet* its way, even among cultivated men of the world.

AN IRRECONCILEABLE.

AN AMERICAN HOUSE OF CORRECTION.

DURING a tour through the United States last year, Detroit, Michigan, was one of the cities visited by our party, and the two sights for which this city is famed are the gaol and the cemetery. Accordingly we were invited first to go to the prison and from thence to the burial ground. We found it rather difficult to make up our minds as to which place we preferred, for both places were most attractive; the prison was really a comfortable, pleasant place, and the cemetery was so peaceful and beautiful that one almost longed to die in order to be buried in so lovely a spot.

The Social Science Congress about to meet at Norwich proposes to discuss once again the question of prison discipline, and *adpropos* of that discussion, the following description of the establishment and maintenance of the Detroit prison will not be without interest. The principles upon which this institution is founded are worth thinking over, seeing that the results are so admirable,—and the writer is not without hope that those who read this brief account, will at least be less inclined to believe in a system of retaliatory and demoralizing punishment in all criminal cases, as a means of lessening the amount of crime.

From 1857 to 1859 the young and growing city of Detroit, Michigan, was in a deplorable condition as regards crime and criminals. The chronicles of that time show that criminals multiplied with astonishing rapidity and pursued their crimes with impunity; houses were burnt by incendiaries, burglaries were of almost nightly occurrence, assaults and drunken disturbances were rife as soon as it began to grow dark. There were only a very few police, inefficiently organized, and quite unable to cope with the great growth of vice which threatened to overwhelm and ruin the city. The gaol was the only place for the detention of all classes of offenders; it was very small and always full; old and young, all crowded together, formed a school of crime from which the prisoners went forth, saturated with vicious propensities, again to prey on society.

This condition of things was naturally very grievous to the well-disposed and orderly residents of Detroit, and for their own protection they resolved at length to establish a House of Correction to try to check the advancing evil. The promoters of the undertaking were evidently men of an enlightened and benevolent character, and the objects they proposed to themselves in the imprisonment of offenders were to be, 1st. The moral influence to be thrown around the

These proposals were not received without very great opposition from those who were unable to grasp the grand design of such an institution, and did not believe in it, and who wished to inflict severe punishments in retaliation for the offences of the criminals. But at length in 1861 the House was established with the object of applying to some useful end the powers of a vagrant and vicious class, too indolent to pursue an honest industry, to occupy the position of a home to the friendless who have been tempted to the threshold of crime, and to endeavour to draw into the ranks of good and orderly citizens those who have been engaged in warring against the peace and well-being of society.

Many people may be inclined to consider these aspirations as the vague dreams of philanthropists or the Quixotic ideas of mere enthusiasts, but let us judge of the tree by its fruits. The institution has now been established twelve years, and the report of the superintendent for last year shows some really remarkable results. In regard to the financial success of the undertaking, it appears that although for the first two years of its existence there was a considerable loss, yet on the whole ten years from 1861 an actual profit of \$103,004.50 (about £20,000) has accrued on account of the labour of the prisoners. The year 1871 alone showed a profit of \$34,855 (about £6,600).

The discipline of the prison has naturally been a somewhat difficult matter to deal with under the proposed mild system. The superintendent observes in his report, that for years it has been his study to combine authority and friendliness in the discipline of prisoners. "At last," he says, "some success has been reached. During the last four years a gradual change of discipline has been in process, which consists first in a transfer of the control exercised from the bodies to the minds of the prisoners. . . . This plan proved successful so far as to enable me to dispense with nearly all the means of punishment ordinarily used, such as the shower bath and the dark cell: flogging was abolished soon after the institution was opened. The yoke, bucking, and the whole catalogue of prison barbarities, including a distinctive prison dress, were never used in this institution." In order to educate the prisoners to use the powers of their minds in matters of obedience and discipline, it was necessary to relax or withdraw the existing authority so far as to give freedom to their wills. Of this the superintendent observes, "This was done to a limited extent at first, and more and more as experience seemed to warrant it, until our workshops and schoolroom now present the appearance of a workshop of freemen and a school of citizens, free from a watch-dog supervision." It is somewhat strange to our ordinary notions to hear of criminals being taught that so long as a prisoner or a citizen is governed in his conduct towards the laws

under which he lives by considerations of rewards and penalties, he is inwardly a criminal ; for if the balance of rewards were to seem to him favourable to wrong-doing, his acts would most probably be wrong, his conduct would rest on no reliable basis, and he could not be trusted. But when on the other hand, from a due appreciation of the friendliness of law or from love to the law-giver, or regard for respectability of behaviour which wins the esteem of his fellow-man, he governs himself, then there is a basis of reliance for his future conduct and evidence of moral improvement.

As regards the reformation of prisoners, the system adopted embraces physical, intellectual, and moral considerations. Pure atmosphere, personal cleanliness, neat dress, and an appropriate dietary, are all agents in facilitating reformation of character. Again, it is stated that "the enlarged apartments in which the prisoners are employed are favourable, and the abundance of light and ventilation present a cheerful appearance, the effect of which upon the mind is good. The character of the employment (chair-making and boot-making) requiring, as it does, much swift running-machinery, produces an inspiriting effect, and assists to arouse the better energies, while the use of tools in mechanical work calls into activity the calculating faculties, cultivates the power of attention, gives firmness to the nervous fibre of the being, and practises the will in the art of self-control." It is evident that the organizers and managers of this institution are men of keen observation, who well understand how the industrial arts may be made most helpful civilizing influences. There is a co-operative department organized among the prisoners, by means of which each operative is permitted to have a share in the profits of the labour in his department over and above the working expenses. Of this the superintendent says : "The co-operative colony which was organized proved to be frugal and self-sacrificing in their expenditure for food and other personal enjoyments, were generous to a fault in their willingness to receive and to aid unproductive but friendless ones ; they work with industry, with energy, and with that hopeful air of successful citizens so rare with criminals and others working by compulsion."

The educational influence is by no means neglected, the principal object being to discipline the mind and fit it to receive and to evolve in life, the thoughts and principles that constitute their possessors good citizens. The crowning feature of the educational effort is the Saturday evening lecture, at which the whole of the prisoners are assembled. In 1871 forty-six lectures were delivered, and one is astonished to find in the list such subjects as "The Imagination," "Is mind Material," "Astronomy," "The Arctic regions and explorations," "The *Me* and the *Not-me*, or that which is *Spiritual* in man," "Mollusks," "God in Nature," and many more titles which would seem to English people quite unfitted for the minds of prisoners.

discipline in the ordinary sense of the word as applied to prisoners. They are governed in their own inward life towards their companions, their officers, towards society, and I trust towards God, by nobler sentiments, more reasonable reflections, and better self-control. Is not this, as far as it goes, evidence of reformation?"

On the occasion of the writer's visit to this House of Correction at Detroit, the scene in the workshop was very striking, considering the circumstances. There were a large number of prisoners all busily engaged with lathes and the necessary tools for turning, all of which would be very dangerous weapons in case of disturbance, and one man alone to act as guard and instructor. The superintendent, Mr. Z. R. Brockway, confidently asserted that there was not the slightest fear of an outbreak, all the operations being controlled chiefly by moral force. If it had not been for the high enclosure wall, and the appearance on the parapet of an armed sentry, it would have been difficult to believe that the establishment was a prison.

In connection with the institution is a separate house, built and supported by the profit of the prisoners' labour, where about twenty of the young women who had been prisoners in the House of Correction, live together, making it their "Home" for an indefinite period. They are trained to strict habits of industry and rectitude, they are educated in the common branches of study, and also in such refinements as may make them indisposed ever to go back to evil courses. They live together very happily, they work hard at sewing, and earn a considerable sum, and spend much of their leisure time in lessons, and every Thursday evening there is a friendly sort of gathering. The matron says, "On this evening the whole family, dressed in their neatest and best attire, and some ten of the longer sentenced, best behaved girls from the House of Correction, all assemble in the parlour and enjoy themselves in conversation and at needlework, to await the coming of the friend who regularly week by week comes at half-past seven to read an hour. On his arrival, after greeting the assembled company pleasantly, as 'young ladies,' he spends the hour in reading selections of poetry, pleasant stories, &c." Afterwards tea and simple refreshments are served, and the evening ends with devotions. Many of the girls have left this Home really reclaimed from vicious habits, and have become useful and respectable members of society.

For reformatory influences, and for wise and beneficent restraint upon criminals, this institution is considered by some to be superior to anything in the world. Detroit is now a well-ordered and delightful city, prosperous in commerce, and, indeed, a centre of intellectual and material energy. And the cemetery (to which we at first alluded),

the midst of a youthful society full of selfish strugglings and unprincipled actions, it is encouraging to find an enterprise of so noble a character working its way with undoubted success. It is a beautiful flower of promise, the growth of which tells us that there is a glorious future for the American nation.

And yet in enlightened England we are behind the people of Detroit! We are slow in perceiving the truth. Many of us struggle with it, and have grave doubts as to floggings and hangings and other physical punishments. Think over it, kind reader, and remember that Christ's teaching is to "do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."

E. PRICE EDWARDS.

BROTHERS AND LOVERS.

I.

VERY comfortable and good-natured and happy looked Madame Ninon, smiling complacently behind her high desk in the *café* of which she was so popular a mistress. For Ninon had a word—rarely an unkind, and never an unfair word—for every one, friend or stranger. She looked altogether as if she liked her work, and liked it better the more plentiful it was. And she had little to complain of on that score, this afternoon of early October, 1870. For not only is “Belle Chance” a *chef-lieu de Canton*, not only does it lie conveniently near the great *Route Imperiale*, running from Paris to the fair city of St. Arznau. Standing well—but not too far—in advance of the wide-spreading forest of Orleans, it formed an invaluable out-post for the army now preparing, with its back thrown against the dense woods, to strike one more blow for France. So Ninon, in her few spare moments, had a busy scene to look at through the broad window by her side. The *café*, as became the *Café de la République*—lately, very lately, the *Café de l'Empire*—formed one end of the long market-place, rising in brave architectural rivalry with the squat old church opposite. But the church was even less thought of than usual to-day, for a regiment of Chasseurs were encamped in front of it, while nearer a body of Zouaves had pitched their dirty little *tentes d'abri*.

So the *place* was lively enough. The horses snorted and plunged, barking the tender trees to which they had been ruthlessly tethered ; the blue-jacket Chasseurs and the Zouaves, in their white fatigue overhauls, burnished *chassepots* or cooked strange messes over smoky camp fires ; the girls, the loungers, and the *gamins* of the district flitted about, laughing and joking, regardless of the feeble frowns of their elders sitting at the shop-doors. Ninon, albeit an observant and gossip-loving old lady, found little time to enjoy this scene ; but there came a momentary lull in business, so when Baptiste finished his billiards and came to his wife's side, he found her, pen in hand, peering over her spectacles at the animated picture. Following her eyes, he saw that they were fixed on one group, of which the central figure was a young woman. Not by any means surpassingly lovely, she was pretty for a French country girl. Her features were neither regular nor particularly attractive when taken singly ; but her rich swarthy complexion and dark twinkling eyes gave an irresistible charm to a face that would have been utterly common-place in pink-and-

ing down the neck. If faults could be picked with her face, none could be found with her figure. She was gifted with that perfect development of body and limb which a southern clime bestows at so early an age. She had the merriest little heart and the loveliest little wit that ever French woman could boast of; and they received admirable justice from her ringing laugh and silvery voice. Such was Margot outwardly, as her companions on the *place*—a couple of soldiers, a *garde mobile*, and a morose-looking fellow in a blouse—or any stranger saw; but it will require those who know her best to tell her character, and who should be more able so to do than her old god-mother Ninon, who has tenderly watched her every step since her own mother died so many a year ago?

"Who are those strangers Margot is talking to, Baptiste, I wonder?" remarked the old lady, when she observed her husband by her side. "She must be saying something very clever, or they must be very dull of understanding, to judge by the way she is going on. Witty, too—but she is always that—for not only is Jacques laughing, which is no miracle, but even Pierre has got a smile on his sulky face."

"Not so sulky as you imagine, wife, I fancy. He thinks a good deal—and badly do we want thinkers now-a-days. He won't be found wanting when the day comes. Worth twenty of his capering brother, he is. Those other two are some fellows Jacques has met drinking. They belong to the line, don't they?" asked Baptiste, fumbling in his pockets for his *pince-nez*. "Green epaulettes? Ah! They're foreign legion men, then—Englishmen or Yankees, or some other foreigners. Don't know any French, I daresay, so Margot is having her fun out of them."

"She likes her joke—and all the better for that. There can be no muddy bottom when the water bubbles and sparkles so. She will make a good mate for some one."

"True, wife. Well, well, if I were only a younger man!"

"Baptiste! For shame!" exclaimed the old lady, raising her pen menacingly, while her bright eye twinkled responsive to her husband's rather dim one. "But here comes Pierre: he has had enough of their fooling."

Pierre entered, and bowed respectfully to the host and hostess. He was a tall, well-made fellow, with closely-cropped hair and a heavy black moustache, which concealed the worst element—and it was a bad element in his face—the mouth. His eyes alone belied the expression of the other features. Not that they were good eyes, or merry eyes, or loving eyes, but there was a strange, unexpected, straightforward look in them. Omit them, and you would at once put him down as a thorough scoundrel. Yet Pierre could meet any one with unfaltering gaze,—alike the good old curé, who shook his head at

much ; for he certainly talked very little, though what he did say was generally pungent and to the point.

"Good morning, Pierre," said Baptiste. "Your foreign friends seem to have succeeded in knocking a little of their mirth into you."

"Let them laugh. It is the fashion to laugh now-a-days, both sides of the face, turn about. We laugh too much on the right side, just now, not to laugh on the wrong shortly."

"Why not be merry, Pierre ? They will fight all the better for it, poor fellows," said Ninon, sympathetic as usual. "But who are these two ?"

"Englishmen. Jacques picked them up somewhere. As one can speak French only a little, the other not at all, they come handy for cutting jokes at. And better so—the wit is so poor, the understanding it would spoil it."

"Bitter as usual, Pierre. Why mayn't the young folks have their bit of fun ? Margot would never insult strangers come to fight for our poor country. She's a good girl."

"Long may she be so."

"Shame, Pierre. You know Margot would wrong no one. You ought to be the last to run her down if, as every one expects, she will soon be one of you."

"What do you mean ?" asked Pierre, with a quick, inquisitive, doubtful glance at the old woman.

"Why, they say she favours Jacques more than any other of her suitors. I am not altogether pleased. Jacques is a charming fellow, but rather flighty for her. If she has a fault, it is want of ballast. I had hoped, now, she might have taken to you."

"Or rather that Pierre had taken to her ; she would have returned it fast enough. She has wit to know who will be the great man of the two," interposed Baptiste, emphasizing this covert testimony to his own foresight by carefully poisoning his *pince-nez* on the top of his rubicund nose.

"Me ? What should I do with such a Will-o'-the-wisp ?" exclaimed the young man, with a harsh, contemptuous laugh. "She is a heartless flirt, nothing more or less. I am immensely glad Jacques has to go away like the rest. If she won't have him, better give him a chance of forgetting her ; if she says she will—why better he should die than have to bear her treatment."

"Nonsense, nonsense," said Ninon ; "if any man but you spoke so, I should be angry. Margot is a merry, lively girl, and why not, pray ? Must everyone be as dull as you ? But she is good as well, and will make an honest, loving wife to any man she chooses. And I'll trust her choice, even should it be Jacques."

"And why should you frighten people by talking about dying ?

Young fellows' hearts don't break so badly. The next maid's kiss is a cement that will soon mend them. Let me see, how often was I jilted before——"

"Baptiste! you are incorrigible. Go and have a game with Pierre, you must not interfere with customers, and here are the two Englishmen coming."

The husband, drilled by long training to obey commands even less congenial, walked off to the billiard table where Pierre was twirling the balls in wondrous fashion with a careless but practised hand, and thinking—as his manner was—not aloud, but in a murmur. Had his host understood these muttered oburgations he would have rejoiced at Pierre's not understanding the remarks of the two foreigners at the next table. So full were they of their pretty subject that they even forgot to lament the absence of pockets or abuse the execrable cushions. Tom Courtenay, whose features were too well known in Oxford to make his quarters there comfortable, and Pat Nolan, to whom Dublin entertained a like aversion, were most exuberant in their praises of the lively Frenchwoman. Words failed even the eloquent Pat when attempting to describe the beauties of his charmer, and he concluded with a sighing anti-climax,—

"How *purty* she talks too!"

"Talks!" laughed Tom; "why you did not understand a word."

"There's the beauty of it. It took ten times longer to make me understand what she meant than to make you understand what she said, so I had ten times longer to look in her *swate* face."

"You designing scoundrel, that is always your cue;—to set yourself up as a miserable exile, with a patrimony of wants and an utter inability to tell them."

"And why not, Mr. Courtenay? Make the women pity you first; they will never really love where they cannot pity. Anything will do—toothache, being plucked, *n'importe*."

"Save your French for Marguerite, Pat; drink to her only with thine eyes."

"And mouth," replied Pat, as they toasted Margot in vermouth.

II.

PIERRE, remaining only to finish his game, left the café and trudged homewards. *Trudge* is the only word to express his walk,—his step was heavy and slow, his head was downcast, his hands were thrust deep in his pockets, yet there was nothing of the slouch about his gait. He was still engaged in that thinking which had so exercised Baptiste during their game, and enabled him easily to beat the best player in the village. And of what was Pierre thinking? Not of politics, not of philosophy, not of military manœuvres—he was no embryo Napoleon, no budding Gambetta. No, he was but a country serf, with no very bright intellect for all his bitterness, with narrow

bitter reality underlying his words to himself. Lying was to him a little matter when put beside Margot's love. He would have died cheerfully merely to hear her say she loved him ; he would kill himself should she say so and then deceive him. And he did think her a heartless coquette, but most unfairly. For he had never betrayed by word, look, or action the love he bore her. It was so great he seemed to think its very greatness ought to wield some sort of mesmerism influence over her ; he condemned her because she saw not instinctively the passion he so strenuously concealed. She shunned him, because his pent-up feelings were masked behind taciturnity verging often on rudeness ; he denounced her, but he did not know her ; he loved her, but credited her with an indifference he had never striven to soften. Yet with what inconsequence did he long for this little flirt to be his, ignoring or careless of the misery she would bring him ! For he was a strange mixture of passion and self-sacrifice. He wished Jacques gone because there would be one rival less in the field, but just as honestly that he might be out of the way of this heartless woman. He felt certain she would bring himself misery and ruin, yet would dare all for one approving smile of hers.

So thinking, he trudged down the long straggling street that led from the *place*, between broad fields of stunted vine poles, then sharp to the left through a winding lane, high banked on either side, leading to the lovely wooded park of the lord of the manor. The turreted gables of his antique *château* could be discerned peeping through the distant foliage of the forest which gradually melted away into the flat, uninteresting grape country. The belt formed by the mingling of the two, gently undulating, studded with noble trees and luxuriant with brushwood, was a natural park of great extent and beauty, intersected with numberless secluded and enticing paths. Marguerite's father was gatekeeper at the big house, and his rustic lodge nestled at the farther end of the lane in which Pierre now was. But Pierre did not seek the lodge. If the park were marred, it was by the interference of a considerable farm which jutted in at the corner nearest to the town of Belle Chance. This farm was now occupied by the father of Pierre and Jacques, having been held by their ancestors from time immemorial. Their yeoman blood was older and purer than the courtly lineage of the present lords of the soil. So no wonder that the family of Léon was respected, and one of the sons considered a good match even for such a popular favourite as pretty Margot. The farm-house lay but a short distance back from the lane, the approach beginning within a stone's throw of Marguerite's cottage. This proximity had thrown the young people together from childhood, so that there had ever been some founda-

Pierre was on the point of turning up to the farm, when a rustle among the early-fallen leaves in the ditch suggested a rat, and rat-hunting not even the solemn Pierre could resist. So he cheived his prey down the lane, through the big gates, across the avenue, into a footpath cut through a thick copse. Not the craftiest fox in all Warwickshire could have devised a more cunning escape. For the hunter suddenly stopped and remained motionless, while the rat turning calmly laughed at him from a hollow stump.

But Pierre did not laugh. Away down the lane he saw a figure which, even without the mobile's uniform, he would have recognised as that of his brother Jacques. By his side walked she whose form, whose every lineament and movement, he knew so well,—he would have recognised her in the far distance, in the dim twilight, among countless thousands,—one fluttering inch of her dress, one flying ribbon in her hair, would have been enough for him,—the trip of her foot, the faint echo of her voice, the light glancing from her rippling hair, the touch of her unseen finger would have assured him of her presence. And not only did Margot walk by Jacques' side, she clung fondly to his arm, and the face was turned up lovingly to his. But Pierre was not near enough to note that it was a sorrowful and earnest face, that the eyes were dim and tearful, that the voice was low and broken. He might have changed his mind had he seen this,—perhaps for the better, probably for the worse. He might have thought her nobler, more true, more capable of love ; he might only have believed her more thoughtless, more cruel, more deceitful. But the distant glimpse was enough, too much, for him. He saw them enter a little by-path, saw Margot jump from the stile into Jacques' arms, saw him hold her in them a long moment, saw—Then he turned with a tear, hard struggled against, in his eye, and "Poor fool !" on his quivering lips.

III.

JACQUES himself came to awaken Pierre, wearied with over-much thought and over-deep sorrow. Afternoon had passed away, and the sun was sinking behind the low trees of the orchard. The air had become chill with the chillness of an autumn evening, and Pierre shivered as he stretched his stiff limbs and prepared to go to supper.

"Stay a little, brother," said Jacques, whose voice wavered, and whose eye was dim, "I want to have a talk with you ; it is the last night, you know."

"Ay, that it is, lad, but it is cold out here ; we shall have plenty of time to-night over the fire."

"Perhaps not ; all the neighbours will be in to say good-bye, and father and mother won't go to bed until they see me there, and I

one else was to brave the evening chill and her old father's watchfulness to meet him after supper.

"As you like, lad ; there is not much to say, though. I know you'll be brave and honourable and do your duty, for all our sakes, if for nothing else. I hope it won't be long before we see you back, perhaps an officer with the Legion of Honour. I wish I were in your place ; if it were not for the old folks, I should soon be in the thick of it," and he spoke more honestly than many of his countrymen who talked more bravely.

"I know you would, if you feel as I do. If it was not for looking forward to the excitement of fighting, going away would hurt me far more than it does now. But I have a secret to tell you and a favour to ask you ; it is not much, and I know you are ready enough always to do anything for me."

"That I am, lad," exclaimed Pierre more heartily than was his wont ; and he spoke truly. If ever one brother loved another, Pierre loved Jacques. Many a time as a boy had he taken the blame of Jacques's madcap tricks upon himself,—from many a scrape as they grew up had he extricated him. The roll of this brother's kind deeds was a long one, while Jacques was as grateful as light-hearted, careless natures can be, and quite as unscrupulous about exacting new proofs of friendship. Had he known to what a test he was about to put that love, he might have shrunk from his purpose ; but he had been blinded as effectually as Margot and Ninon and every one else, so he did not hesitate.

"I have such a glorious secret to tell you : I am so happy—if I had not to leave it all. But it will be right enough when I come back. I am to be married when I come back, Pierre."

Pierre staggered, and could only mutter—

"To, to——"

"To Marguerite, brother ; do you not deem me happy ?"

"God help you, Jacques," groaned Pierre, as he wrung his brother's hand, and turned away his head.

"Why, what do you mean ? You are a miserable enough comforter ; I am sure you can find no fault with Margot, you won't show me a better or a finer girl in the Loiret, or out of it for that matter."

Pierre did not speak. Words had come too thick and fast for him to speak at first, and a moment's thought had turned the stream back. Why should he make the poor boy more miserable on the eve of his departure ?—it was settled between them to his satisfaction, and that would send him away with a lighter spirit ; he might be killed like many another as young, and that would make him meet death with a firmer soul ; his love might melt away, after the first

under disappointment. Nothing selfish entered into his calculations, though there was the instinctive feeling—as such unworthy of formal recognition—that it would neither change Marguerite's nature nor better his own prospects to try to poison his brother's mind against his sweetheart. This and much more passed through Pierre's mind, but Jacques was waiting for his answer.

"She couldn't find a better than you in the Loiret, or out of it, lad, that I can truly say ; for no man or woman can know you better than I do. I only hope you may both be happy."

"You don't seem quite to like it ; I expected you to be nearly as glad as myself. What is wrong, brother ? You can think no ill of her ?"

"No, no, lad. I do not think she is quite the girl for you, but I may be amiss, as I often am. I have got so fond of looking over walls to see what lies on the other side, that I find myself prying over walls that exist only in my own imagination. It is wrong, I know ; we have real troubles enough in this world to make us turn out of doors those of our own making—and a good many of other people's making too, if we be wise enough and brave enough. I can honestly wish you joy, and Marguerite too ; if I don't appear to be very hopeful about it, put that down to the bad squint my mind's eye seems to have got."

"You'll not speak so when you know her better. But now that I have told you my secret I must ask my favour. I want you to look after my little Margot when I am gone."

"Look after her ! Why, do you mistrust her already ?"

"Mistrust her ? No. But I think it is a shame to leave a woman lonely and unprotected. I want you to cheer her up and talk to her about me. Then the Prussians might come here, there may be fighting—a woman is none the worse for having a strong man she can trust near her at such a time. Besides, she may be true as steel, but that will not prevent men annoying her—especially those foreigners, who are here to-day and away to-morrow, often causing pain enough to the hearts they cannot break. If she tells you any man persecutes her, give him a hint, as I should do. I want to know she has some one to look up to and trust in. You won't refuse me such a trifle as that ?"

For Pierre it was a very bitter and stern moment. The task seemed to him a much harder one than his brother imagined. He did not anticipate that Marguerite would require much cheering up—the absence of one lover would not deeply affect her who had a hundred, and who estimated them all at the same low worth. But he foresaw more thankless work in guarding her from impetuous ad-

he render himself still further displeasing in Margot's eyes, by setting himself up as a monitor, by driving away her lovers, by curtailing her amusements, by continually whispering in her ear "Jacques, Jacques; remember Jacques." Not only was he prevented from urging his own suit—he was too honest to try to win her from his brother whilst they were betrothed—but was asked to watch the safety of another's, to drown his own love that he might advantage another's, to make himself hateful that another might be idolized. It was a very bitter step to take this heart-sacrifice, but Pierre was one of those men who take a fierce pride in such self-torture. He had in him much of the red Indian or the Hindoo fakir; he never took up a line of action but he went through with it to its logical termination, however terrible, however crude, however unreasonable it might be. So he crushed down all his own feelings—his weaknesses, he thought, his love, his tenderness, his compassion, with one very strong and harsh and uncompromising resolve as he turned to his brother and again took his hand.

"Yes, Jacques, I promise you. You may safely trust her to me. If you lose her while she is under my care, you will never see me again in this life. You know what my promise means?"

"That I do, Pierre: and you imagine not how happy you have made me in giving me it. I shall march off twice as gaily to-morrow."

The brothers took a quiet walk up and down the orchard, neither speaking. Then Jacques turned, as if to go; but Pierre stopped him, asking, with all his usual composure:—

"Why do you call this a secret, lad? Why not tell the old folk and Margot's father before you go? They will all be only too glad, and it will make you easier as well."

"We thought of that, but both Margot and I feel it best to keep it quiet until I come back. I hardly know all the reasons we had. Something instinctive, I suppose, made us both decide it was the proper thing. Old Madame Ninon alone will know."

"It does not matter much; you may trust me," was all the elder brother said; but he was more convinced than ever of the girl's duplicity. "She can throw him over without every one casting it in her teeth," he thought.

Ah, poor Marguerite! Are you malignant, or are you so very wicked? You don't look like "throwing him over," as you lie there now in his arms, sobbing as if your little heart were already broken, bidding a last adieu to your soldier boy, with the bright stars and weather-beaten old trees for witnesses of your oft-repeated

house in the early morning. The old father and mother broke down completely. Margot, who came running for a last good-bye, kept up wonderfully, at which her sweetheart, the witness of her grief the night before, when he urged her to be brave, was delighted. Pierre put her conduct down as utterly unfeeling. But he did not see her sitting all alone in her little orchard while he walked with his brother to the station, where there was more crying and lamenting from crowds of relatives, with wishes of "*bon succès*," and appeals to be brave from enthusiastic—if non-combatant—fellow-citizens.

It was quite *à-la-mode* that the train and its freight should be some hours before getting into trim for starting; so midday had passed ere Pierre, having wrung his brother's hand for the last time, returned with the crowd to the town. This influx of people from the station detached a very considerable contingent to the support of the *Café de la République*; and thus, though the young farmer's long legs had given him a good start, he was speedily relieved from an embarrassing position. For Pierre had found the great room occupied by two women alone. Baptiste had gone with the world to see the departure, leaving Ninon to wait upon any stray customers. She did not find a great deal to do; and it was well, for Marguerite came to pour forth her tale in the ears of the kind old godmother. There she looked for sympathy and comfort and strength; there she found it. Ninon, with womanly tact, soothed Margot by glorifying her betrothed; and raised her spirits by urging her to be worthy of him. She so coaxed and caressed and kissed the little girl—she was but a little, ignorant, simple-hearted girl after all—that tears almost gave place to smiles, and sobs sounded like laughter; while the buoyant young heart strove to rise over "the surf of the present," and dwell only on the deep, radiant calm of the future.

This transformation was in one way unfortunate, for Pierre entering just as it had been completed, found Marguerite in spirits more cheerful than he thought suitable to the occasion. He was a strong-feelinged, rough-mannered, demonstrative fellow himself: there could have been no mistaking the presence of a great sorrow in his heart; his face, his manner, would speak more eloquently and truthfully than any words his lips might utter. Unpractised in concealing emotion, he could not detect hidden emotion in others. He was too unobservant of the niceties of look-language, too ignorant of the very signs and symbols of feeling's intricate calculus, to find in every tell-tale feature of Margot's sure and trusty witnesses to a mourning love.

What to him were the tear-dimmed eye, the yet tear-stained cheek, the quivering hard-bitten lip, the quickly-averted head, that almost

when quiet? What to him were all these tokens of a great throbbing heart within, swelling up so big, raising tumultuously the broad bosom, choking in the faultless dusky throat, all for love of a far-away soldier boy? He saw only the fictitious cheerfulness that Ninon's condolence and advice called into being; he saw only the false and miserable attempt at mirth that could have deceived no eyes but his own.

The old grandmother, knowing well that nothing distracts from grief like work, made Marguerite help her this busy afternoon. And the little girl struggled hard and bravely. She compelled her legs to trip with something of their wonted nimbleness up and down the little winding stair, her hands to show somewhat of their usual deftness in the fingering of *carafons*; she attempted to dress her face in its old arch smile; she forced her lips to pay back the railery of the customers—poor enough coin it mostly was—with her quondam sparkling wit; she tried to smile, nay, burst out once into a ringing laugh—whose heartiness no one might question—at some absurdity of Pat Nolan's. Such an effort—when the sorrow is not a heartbreaking one, when the soul is not utterly darkened, without one glimmer of hope—must succeed more or less; and all the more in a healthy, sturdy mind like Marguerite's. Ere it was time to run home, her cheerfulness had much more of reality about it; she had worked herself out of one tiredness into another—out of the lassitude born of grief, into the weariness begotten of many steps; she scarcely remembered the one consolation that had buoyed her up at first, the thought of mounting to her own little garret to have such a good cry over the likeness and other little relics of her absent Jacques. But it came back again as she stepped out of the glitter, and warmth, and hum of the great café into the crisp evening air to walk home with Pierre. For Pierre had waited on, moodily in a corner, with dog-like devotion, until Marguerite pleased to leave. Not that there was anything strange in that. Many a time had he thus waited patiently—neglecting the farm for drink, neighbours said—hour after hour, too often to find that she had promised, or was determined, to accept the escort of a more lively cavalier. But she never guessed that he waited for her, and he was but a gloomy companion, so wherein was she to blame? To-night, however, there was no chance of such a *contretemps*. Margot would not have flirted to-day, or before Ninon and Pierre, had she felt so inclined, but she had no such desire. Her old favourite occupation had lost all charms for her. Who should, who could take her home but Pierre? Was he not to fill Jacques's place—at least as far as protecting, looking after, comforting Jacques's little betrothed went?

was not the brother there, keeping his watchful eye on his charge, ready to show his teeth to all intruders? "Of course I can have no one but Pierre," thought Marguerite, as she peremptorily refused Courtenay's company, and tucked her hand under the guardian mastiff's big paw. The mastiff was not in the best of humours; he was distinctly disagreeable—disagreeable even for him. Bad as he thought the girl before, he had not calculated on such indecent mirth, on such instantaneous forgetfulness of a lover, on such shallowness of feeling, such coldness, deadness of heart. More than once did he ask himself, "Is it worth while trying to keep her for Jacques? would it not be brotherly kindness to try rather to drive her further from him?" But he was afraid—he need not have been, no one guessed his sentiments—of being accused of selfishness; and his loyalty to his brother was strong.

Jacques surely would never think it for his good; why should Pierre break his pledged word, incur a brother's anger, through trying to hasten what was coming surely, quickly enough of its own accord? So Pierre stuck to his task, waited for the heartless coquette, and marched her off home. "If she has one spark of affection, not to say love," he mused, "she will be sure to talk of him on the way, to induce me to praise him, to let me comfort her."

Yes, Pierre, had it only been a light affection, a passing fancy that possessed that girlish heart; had it not been a love too deep for even you to fathom in another; had her grief not been of that silence-compelling, sympathy-despising kind which you deem her incapable of feeling. Catch but a glimpse of the truth, allow yourself for one moment to be undeceived, then will you understand what is meant by that listless talk of crops, and neighbours, and nothing, by that resolute avoidance of the one all-engrossing subject, by that stern hurling back from the lips of what fills the too-full heart. When your own love is greatest, your own anguish bitterest, do you talk to your casual companion, do you talk to your brother of it all? If you speak, is it not of politics, of hunting, of work, of play, of anything rather than Margot? Yes, but Pierre thinks no one feels as he does, least of all the hard, cruel, little serpent who bids him adieu by the gate, with a tearless face and steady voice, going away up into her little room, to sink on the hard boarded floor, to open the flood-gates of that bursting heart, to sob and cry—so bitterly.

V.

MARGOT soon cried herself to sleep, awaking greatly refreshed, both in body and mind. Why not? That a healthy, high-spirited, pure-minded girl should mope and sulk because of a lover's

few weeks' absence were intensely unnatural. The first pang—albeit a very bitter wrench—must give way to delightful reminiscences, pleasant pictures, happy hopes. Dash the tears away, Margot,—rush bravely into the whirl of duty, and sternly refuse to be morbid. So Marguerite did. She went daily to help her god-mother, the soldiers became as infatuated about her as ever, she soon laughed and talked with sprightly gaiety. Yet, withal, those who knew her best marked a certain staidness and earnestness foreign to the maiden of a very little time ago. Though she began in the evening homewalk to talk to Pierre of the absent one, he shut himself up in his ignorant imaginings, and condemned cruelly his charge through those busy and terrible days.

Terrible and busy days they were. Not many opportunities had Marguerite for flirting with the soldiers Jacques so dreaded. Once only did she allow herself to be escorted home by Courtenay, Pierre being at the moment out of the way—refusing even to take Tom's arm. Once only—for the foreign legion had sterner work the next evening. The sound of distant artillery, which had alarmed Margot as she ran up to the town, drew nearer, the café shutters were closed, the neighbours peeped timorously through the *pince-nez*. They could see the hasty retreat of France's chaotic troops, they watched the last heroic stand of the foreign volunteers behind every wall and at every corner.

Not till dusk did the shattered remains of the legion retire from a hopeless resistance, bloody, grieved, and sullen, into the forest. Then with racket and confusion streamed in the Prussians. Much thundering at doors, and flashing of lanterns, and guttural babble, terrifying the inhabitants out of their little wits, attended the billeting of the new-comers. They swarmed into the *cafés*, into the hotels, into the *patissiers'* shops, into wherever food and drink could be obtained for money. The Café de la République overflowed into the street; and how Marguerite managed to take her orders amid the hurricane of strange sounds, or to execute them in the closely packed rooms, was miraculous. But she succeeded in a way that presaged a roaring trade for Baptiste. The barbarians, like their more civilised neighbours, seemed not to object to good attendance; and though caring little for sullen looks and even studied discourtesy, prefer—other things being equal—ordinary civility. Ninon—no less patriotic than her neighbours—was not foolish enough to disregard such a common-sense view; and resolved that no effort on her part should be wanting to increase Marguerite's *dot* out of Prussian pockets, by gold skilfully extracted by the little *bénéficiaire* herself. So during the next few weeks Marguerite's time was fully occupied in fulfilling this charitable design; gallant officers competed for the honour of a word with the sprightly little damsel, and wondered who the ill-favoured, bad-tempered fellow could be, sitting scowling in a

corner the better part of the day, and carrying off the submissive maiden in such unloving fashion every night-fall. But Pierre cared no whit for their imaginings; he thought of poor Jacques, absent, unheard of—alas! uncared for by the one whose first thoughts he claimed and yearned for. Poor, deceived Jacques! cruel, deceitful Margot! and so Pierre waited for the end.

Another turn—an unlooked-for one—of Fortune's wheel, one more terrible day of thunder and smoke and confusion. Ninon lost her foreign customers; again the Chasseurs and the Zouaves disported themselves between the church and the café. Margot had old friends to laugh and talk with, while Pierre came out of his corner and kept his watch from the of-late-much-abused billiard table. A long watch he had kept, yet could bring no charge but that of youthful liveliness against his ward. But he never relaxed; he watched on.

"*Morbleu!* who would have thought of your missing that now?" exclaimed Baptiste, towards evening, as his adversary broke down over an easy *carambole*.

"Something put me off my stroke, I suppose," returned Pierre, absently; his eyes—and his mind with them—had wandered to the other end of the long room, to Tom Courtenay and Marguerite. True, the foreign legion was always to the front, so Tom's presence was not extraordinary to ordinary mortals. But Pierre read every little action in the light of his own jealous suspicions, and whoever talked to Margot was observed with lynx-eyed pertinacity. So as Courtenay entered the room he broke down in his stroke; thereafter he bestowed but one inattentive eye upon the game, until Tom left,—when he threw down his cue with a look and an oath that astonished mild old Baptiste, drained all the brandy from the nearest *carafon*, and rushed from the house. Marguerite, tripping down the winding stair, while her hand lingeringly left a little note concealed in her bosom, just over where her warm, happy heart was beating, saw him go, and shouted, "Pierre, Pierre!" in her loudest and gayest tone. But Pierre heard her not—or if he did, the merry ring of her voice but goaded on his mad flight.

"Where has that stupid old Pierre gone in such a hurry?" she asked of Ninon, who did not know. "Well, I hope he will come back soon, for I must leave early to-night, godmother, father wants me." A twinkle in the bright eye told of a naughty little story.

But Pierre did not come back. He dashed across the crowded *place*, and seated himself upon the church steps, whence, unobserved, he could watch the café opposite. Though his eyes never wandered from the door, his whole frame was agitated; a restless unease marked every action, a frenzied whirl of thoughts found muffled utterance under his heavy moustache, which could not hide the twitchings of the mouth. "At last, at last!" he exclaimed, half aloud, and more than once; "ah, Jacques, poor lad!—and that

Pierre followed afar off among the vineyards.

Down the lane and through the big gates, whereat stood her father's little cottage, tripped Margot, singing, almost dancing, in her exuberant joy. Unseen—but seeing—behind tree and hedge, glided slouchingly the dark, muttering Pierre. Across the avenue went Margot, and down the footpath cut through the copse. Pierre crept to the end of the footpath and cautiously peeped down it. What would he not have given to have escaped that sight? What would he not give to tear from his brain all that that short glance there indelibly printed? A second time he saw Marguerite jump from the stile into a man's arms, a second time saw her held there, a second time—then he turned away; the tear obtained the mastery this time—but now it was the tear of rage and revenge. The man's back was towards him, and partially concealed by the foliage; but Pierre caught sight at once of the blue coat and green epaulette of the foreign legion. That was enough. Pierre fell on his knees for a moment and raised his clasped hands above his head, then dived silently into the thicket. He wound noiselessly amongst the brushwood, until he heard footfalls and whispered voices. He crouched down and waited, while his hand again crept beneath his blouse. In the path—a yard from him—they stopped; he could see, through the branches, a man's broad breast—but Marguerite's head lay thereon. He could see the upturned loving face, the massy coils of hair, the perfect, warm neck, the full bosom heaving with emotion, despite the strong arms that held it tight. No word was uttered for a moment—an eternity. Then Marguerite took a step back, and in the great silence Pierre could hear the whisper, "Dearest, how I love you!" and knew—though a great dimness fell on his eyes and he saw nothing—that the perjured woman who spoke was looking up into a lover's face with eyes full of infinite tenderness and love. The dimness passed away, the man's broad chest was there within reach of his outstretched arm. One moment more—a shot rang through the silent woods, a man fell in the narrow pathway with the life flowing fast away, a girl flung herself upon his body with the stifled shriek "Jacques, Jacques!" while over all stood a dark, fierce man, powerless, with glassy stare, unconscious—the worker of an awful crime and fatal blunder—the victim of his own blind passion.

VI.

A PAINFUL death scene was that in the wood, with the autumn sun setting behind the trees.

"I am going fast, Margot; be calm, dearest; I can bear it better and live longer so."

Pierre shrink from that condemning face, such keen torture and its calm, speechless agony inflict. It not only reproached him for his error, it told of deep true love for the dying man; Pierre saw all now—and he despised himself. He turned his head away and sunk down on the ground beside them.

A choking gurgle came in Jacques's throat; Margot sitting down, laid his head on her lap, stroking his face the while, and now and again kissing it. He looked easier, and feebly trying to raise a hand, whispered "Pierre."

Pierre turned fiercely, with a flash of his old bitterness, on Margot.

"Why did you not tell me? I saw him give you that letter, I followed you here, I saw this coat and these——"

"Then you did your duty by me, Pierre. You nobly performed your promise to me—knowing only what you did. Hush, blame not my poor Margot. I would leave you both friends when I am gone."

Marguerite uttered no word, she did not even weep. She but bent down her face in helpless anguish, and kissed the speaker. Pierre wept, his anger was all gone out of him. Jacques spoke again, with painful labour.

"Margot said you left the café ere she had time to tell you, Pierre. And this coat; it is Pat Nolan's. I dared not leave our camp, it is five miles off, in my own uniform—our discipline is strict, Pierre. And I could not be so near without seeing her."

There was another sharp struggle for breath and life, the straining eyes turned upwards to her, to see whom he had risked that life. She wailed, as unconscious, "To see me thus, to see me thus!"

"I expected to see you both, happy and well. The note, Courtenay so good-naturedly took mentioned you too, Pierre. But you left ere Margot had time to tell you. You will forgive each other, if there be ought to forgive, where both meant well?"

He took Margot's hand and laid it, she neither resisting nor aiding him, on his brother's, and then went on—

"You will not say how this happened—it is my last wish and request—explain it in some way. Pierre, you will still watch over Margot, I leave her to you; and you, my darling, when you marry, as you will, I would sooner imagine you happy with——"

Both knew the words that the death-rattle left unuttered. A wild glance upward and around, at brother and betrothed, at the golden woods and the blood-red level sun. A strong man's last struggle to retain within his grasp the world and life and love,—then all was over.

Marguerite sat for a few minutes gazing at the dead head upon

kissed the face ; then he too stood upright, facing her.

"Will you, can you forgive me, Marguerite?"

"There is nothing to forgive; *he* said so. If there is, I have forgiven you already; *he* told me to do so."

"But will you not of yourself forgive me? will you not admit I loved my brother, not wisely, but too well? I shall probably die for this, Marguerite; even if I convince justice I did not intend to kill him, I must admit I intended killing some one. As I go now to give myself up, I can go more bravely if I know there is one person believes that morally I am guiltless, that I blundered, but did not sin,—God knows that, but I had rather you thought it."

The girl cowered backwards with a look of terrified wonderment. She spoke with a weird, *far-away* voice.

"What? Give yourself up,—say you did it? Disregard his last wish? Why, that were worse than murdering him; ten thousand times worse."

"Behold how she loved him."

Pierre cast a wondering, submissive glance upon the woman—she had become a woman in these last moments—before him. Jacques' tiniest word was her law. At his command she forgave and screened his murderer. A thought flashed through him, and drove the blood tingling to his face. The thought that there was a wish later than what she had called his last. Would she go so far in dutiful obedience? or was it thus far and no farther? But Pierre crushed down the delusive fancy as one having no right to existence, then or there, and asked submissively,

"Then what shall we do?"

"Make an excuse—*he* said so. We can tell how we found him dying, how he accused a Prussian of it; that will do."

"Marguerite, Marguerite, can I allow you to shield me thus?"

"*He* said it, and he *must* be obeyed. It is my duty to see that he is obeyed. I will kill you and myself too, if you dare to rebel against him."

"I shall obey; what must I do?"

"Tell them to come and bury him;—I shall stay here."

So Pierre left her alone with her dead.

Pierre saw how terribly he had mistaken Margot; he told himself that he could not read her aright, even now. Her conduct was so appallingly strange, her calmness so supernaturally awesome, she was so beyond the ken of his shallow observation, the bounds of his narrow philosophy. Was she mad, or in a fit? Was it apathy or despair or strong will, that kept her so unmoved? He knew not, but this he knew, that she had loved Jacques, and loved his memory with a great and unspeakable love; that she was no shallow, cruel flirt,

but a deep-souled, warm-hearted woman,—and he loved her all the more.

Soon, very soon, when left alone with her dead, the pent-up tears came. The dulness of the first shock gave way to all the acute demonstrations of grief. When Pierre and his assistants returned to the corpse, they could not choose but hesitate in reverent awe before attempting to separate the living from the dead.

Marguerite lay with her arms round his body, one hand holding back the curly hair from the forehead; the cold white face was pressed close against the warm, dusky one, in startling contrast; the lustreless eyes were piercing the blue sky far above, regardless of those tear-filled ones that gazed into them, as if commanding that they should again receive their sight; ever and anon she kissed the slightly-parted lips; unceasingly she wailed and called back her departed one, with every endearing argument that love and despair could fashion. Pierre turned away from the sight, while two old fathers tenderly took up the daughter from the son, and then, homeward,

“They bore him barefaced on the bier,
And on his grave rains many a tear;
For he is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
He never will come again.”

* * * *

The evening after he was laid in his grave, Pierre took Marguerite a walk; fresh air she was sorely in need of, to dry up the tears and brighten up the roses in her cheeks. They stood at the gate to say good evening.

“Marguerite, this must be more than good evening; this must be good-bye for a long time, perhaps for ever.”

“What do you mean?”

“I am going to join the army to-morrow.”

“Oh, no, indeed you must not,” was the calm, commanding reply. “He said you were to stay and take care of me, and you *must*. But I see how it is; you are a coward, you cannot bear the consequences of what you have done; you are afraid to face me and yourself; it is not brave to court death to escape conscience.”

“Indeed it is hard, but that I could bear, heavy though the cross be. But here I have no choice; Jacques would have done it for me. Your honour, mine, the honour of us all, his memory demands it?”

“I—I do not understand.”

“Know you not what they say, Marguerite? What kind friends and neighbours say? They say Jacques was deserting his post, a traitor to duty. He was not that, but he disobeyed orders, he would have been shot in face of his regiment if caught.”

the burden at the thought. She recovered quickly, to find him thus supporting her and looking strangely in her face.

"Thanks, I am better now, Pierre ; I can stand quite well alone, I assure you. And they say such things of *him*, do they ?"

Pierre ventured not to touch her when she no longer required his aid ; he felt himself an unclean and abased thing before some bright, spotless divinity. He made answer,

"Yes, they say so. What would Jacques have me do ? Must I not go to fight off dishonour from his memory ?"

"Yes, Pierre ; you are right, you must go. Good-bye." But she turned again immediately and held up her face, saying :

"You may kiss me, Pierre. I will give you his permission thereby ; and it will make you remember why and for whom you fight."

All past terrible memories blotted out, all future fearful forebodings vanished—only one moment of unutterable bliss, one glimpse of heaven—for the wretched murderer. He kissed, with reverent awe, the upturned face ; then went away to fight for his brother's memory, for her honour, for his house's good name, with one sacred, never-vanishing print of a kiss upon his lips.

JOHN ADAM.

(To be continued.)

WORDSWORTH, in the supplementary preface contained in the second volume of his works, asserts in the most emphatic way the deplorable ignorance of "the most obvious and important phenomena" of nature which characterizes the poetical literature of the period intervening between the publication of the "Paradise Lost" and the "Seasons." It is to be feared that his opinion is, to a large extent, justified by the facts of the case. A very cursory examination of the productions of the poets who flourished during the seventy years referred to will suffice to show how little they were affected by the manifold beauty and grandeur of the visible universe everywhere around them. In this respect they contrast unfavourably, not only with their successors of the present century, which might have been expected, but with those of the two preceding centuries as well. The latter, whose works embrace a period dating back a hundred years from Milton, display, generally, a much more accurate acquaintance with the appearances and phenomena of the natural world, and spontaneousness in the expression of it, than the school of Dryden and Pope, who may be regarded as the most conspicuous examples of Wordsworth's strictures. Of Pope, particularly, it might almost be said that from his writings it could scarcely be inferred that there was much else in existence than courts, and fashion, and scandal—not much, at all events, that was worth caring for. He excelled in the representation of the modish life of the day—its fine ladies with their patches, its fine gentlemen with their periwigs, and its general artificiality. Of nature in its endless continuity, and variety, and mysteriousness, which has stirred the hearts of men in every age, and kindled many smaller poets into enthusiasm, he knew and cared little, and the trim alleys and botanical distortions of Versailles which he has characteristically described, may be taken as typical of his own inspiration on the matter. It may be worth while mentioning, as a pertinent illustration of these comments, that in his poem of "Windsor Forest," with the exception of a semi-patriotic allusion to the oak, in connection with shipbuilding, there is not a reference to a single forest tree, not even to any of those famous historical oaks which abound in the locality. Nature, and simplicity, in truth, had gone out of fashion, and were not much in vogue again till far on in the century.

Darwin, a mere poetaster compared with the genius of Twickenham, is a well-known instance of the opposite defect—of the absence of poetic fire rather than of a taste for the delights of the country. His "Botanic Garden" is a dreary mechanical affair, several degrees

earlier. Both are constructed on an allegory, erroneous principle. Science is science, and poetry is poetry, and while, as is well illustrated in "The Princess" and "In Memoriam," the scientific spirit may be distinctly present, yet anything like a formal, didactic attempt at amalgamation is certain to prove a failure.

Although belonging to an earlier date than the sterile period referred to, George Herbert might also be quoted here as a case of poetic talent of a very genuine kind, yet unaccompanied by much perception of natural beauty or picturesqueness. He has sometimes been likened to Keble, a brother churchman and clergyman, but between the two in their feeling and apprehension of the wonders of creation, the difference is singular and complete. Herbert's strong point was spiritual anatomy. His probing and exposure of the deceits and vanities of the human heart, and his setting forth of the dangers of the world to spirituality of mind, is at once quaint and incisive. But of any love or special knowledge of the physical world there is scarcely a trace.* Keble's poetry, on the other hand, quite as unworldly as that of the author of "The Temple," is redolent everywhere of the sights and sounds of nature. The seasons with their endless changes, the motions of the heavenly bodies, the fragrance of the field, trees, rivers, mountains, and all material things, are assimilated, so to speak, into the very essence of his verse. That very world which to Herbert was only base and utterly indifferent, seemed to Keble, to use his own words, "ennobled and glorified," and awakened in his soul poetical emotions of the highest and purest kind.

It is unnecessary to enter into much detail in order to show, how much more truly than himself, Pope's predecessors, and especially those of the Elizabethan era, were entitled to the designation of poets of nature. Shakespeare, Spenser, the two Fletchers, Milton, and many others, might be adduced in confirmation. With reference to botany, it is evident that the greatest of the tribe, in his universality of knowledge, flowing over into every region of human research, was well acquainted with the subject in its two-fold aspect—trees and flowers. Many beautiful floral descriptions occur in the plays, and although the arboricultural allusions are less frequent, they are sufficiently numerous to justify the belief that his knowledge was both extensive and accurate. Perhaps the most important passage of the kind is where Cranmer, "dilating on a wind of prophecy," portrays, under the figure of a "mountain cedar," the future glories of the reigns of Elizabeth and her successor.† Milton has many striking

* One of his biographers has discovered a solitary verse, on the faith of which he complacently assumes that Herbert "was thoroughly alive to the sweet influences of nature."

† Commentators affirm Ben Jonson to be the author of the lines referred to.

"to equal which the tallest pine,
Hewn on Norwegian hills to be the mast
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand ; "

and the comparison of the rebel host to blasted pines, are fine examples of the poetical transmutation of botanical knowledge. Still finer is the exquisite description in "Lycidas" of the vernal flowers strewn on the hearse of his lamented friend. And, not to multiply quotations further, the vale of Vallombrosa has been immortalized for ever by three lines in "Paradise Lost."*

In later poetry, not of the present century, Shenstone and Cowper were both genuine lovers of nature, and their works abound with passages relating to rural pleasures and scenery. Cowper, indeed, might be styled *par excellence* the poet of the country. No one ever believed more thoroughly than himself in his own epigrammatic line,

"God made the country, and man made the town."

The revolution in the poetical taste of the time, afterwards consummated by Wordsworth, was mainly initiated by the recluse of Olney. In Shenstone's poems, now, it is to be feared, little read, there are some verses bearing on the subject of this essay which have a curious resemblance to Mr. Tennyson's famous song, "Come into the garden, Maud." We quote eight lines to be found in the piece designated a "Pastoral Ballad, in Four Parts ;"—

"From the plains, from the woodlands and groves,
What strains of wild melody flow !
How the nightingales warble their loves
From thickets of roses that blow !

* * * * *

"Then the lily no longer is white ;
Then the rose is deprived of its bloom ;
Then the violets die with despite,
And the woodbines give up their perfume."

The ring and manner of this is very similar to Mr. Tennyson's composition, and although the measure is a little different, these verses might be interpolated in the modern song without in the least impairing its harmony, or affecting its verisimilitude.

* "Till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd
His legions, angel forms, who lay intranc'd,
Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa."



they have probably done more than anybody else to foster the modern idea of nature, and the love of wild and picturesque scenery. Our business, however, is more particularly with Mr. Tennyson, and with the evidences of botanical knowledge to be found in his works, that part of botany at least relating to trees. These allusions, we apprehend, are more numerous, and show more insight, and acquaintance with the forms, and processes, and changes characteristic of the inhabitants of the forest than those of any other modern author. His verse in this respect differs from other descriptive poetry chiefly in this, that his notices are not general appellations or similitudes applicable equally to any or all trees, but are specific, exact, and true only in the particular case. Thomson, for example, in the "Seasons," is, in general, curiously vague in his descriptions. He generalizes constantly, and presents his readers with broad effects sketched *en masse*, instead of individual details. Such phrases as "sylvan glades," "vocal groves," "umbrageous shades," and the like, frequently occur, doing duty in place of more minute representations. Mr. Tennyson, on the other hand, and Sir Walter and Wordsworth may also be included, pursues exactly the contrary method. His descriptions are, nearly always, pictures of particular places instead of fancy sketches, and the distinguishing features are given incidentally in the course of the narrative. Where, again, particular trees are referred to, it is almost invariably with a phrase or an epithet clenching the description as precisely as a paragraph from Evelyn or Loudon. And, as poetry, these casual, accidental bits of descriptive writing are infinitely more effective than any amount of versified disquisition, of the Darwin sort, on the processes of vegetation. Slight, too, though in many cases they are, they indicate a deep appreciation of the results and tendencies of modern science. In what remains of this paper it is proposed, a little in detail, to adduce evidence from Mr. Tennyson's poems in support of the views we have expressed. It will not be necessary to go over the whole field, and we shall therefore select a few of the more important trees, and see to what extent his notices of them are corroborative of these preliminary remarks.

The ash will be the first example, and the reference in the lines quoted below is to the proverbial lateness of this tree in developing its foliage. It forms part of the Prince's song in the "Princess;"—

"Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?"

This is a very striking comparison, happily expressed, and besides.

serving its immediate purpose, corrects an erroneous notion somewhat popular, that sometimes the ash and sometimes the oak is in leaf first. Then, again, in the "Gardener's Daughter," Juliet's eyes and hair are thus described :—

"Love, unperceived,
Came, drew your pencil from you, made those eyes
Darker than darkest pansies, and that hair
More black than ash-buds in the front of March ;"

a fact which all observers of the phenomena of the spring months will recognize as accurate.

The lime seems a special favourite of Mr. Tennyson, so lovingly and frequently does he use it for illustration. There is much imitative beauty in the well-known lines, (also from the "Gardener's Daughter") which form the conclusion of the description of a cathedral city—possibly Peterborough :—

"And all about the large lime feathers low,
The lime a summer home of murmurous wings."

The giving out of branches close to the ground is a noticeable habit of the lime, as it is also, to some extent, of the elm, particularly in Devonshire. The mode of growth and the development of the branches are still further illustrated :—

"Not thrice your branching limes have blown
Since I beheld young Laurence dead."

The epithet "branching" refers to another peculiarity—the number and intricacy of the branches in the centre of the tree. On this point Mr. Leo Grindon, a good authority, says :—"So dense is the mass, that to climb a full-grown tree is nearly impossible." The frequent use of the lime for avenues and walks, a practice still more prevalent on the continent, is very pictorially stated :—

"and overhead,
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime
Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end."

Its spring-time is photographed in "Maud" in a single sentence, thus :—

"A million emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime."

Every student of botany will be able to verify the correctness of this line. The buds are peculiarly red, and the appearance of thousands of them bursting at once is precisely as the poet describes it. Elsewhere, the period immediately preceding the foliation of the trees is sketched with remarkable truthfulness :—

The Spanish chestnut, *Castanea*, is not one of Mr. Tennyson's trees; but there are frequent references to the horse-chestnut, *Æsculus*. The three chestnuts in the "Miller's Daughter" will be in the recollection of most readers of his poetry. The appearance of the buds just before emerging from their green covering, and the time of their development, are registered with minute accuracy:—

"But, Alice, what an hour was that,
When after roving in the woods
('Twas April then), I came and sat
Below the chestnuts, when their buds
Were glistening in the breezy blue."

"Glistening" is the exact epithet here. The early foliation of the chestnut and elm we find in the exquisite fragment "Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere." The lines on the chestnut are very characteristic:—

"In curves the yellowing river ran,
And drooping chestnut-buds began
To spread into the perfect fan,
Above the teeming ground."

This and the similar remark on the elm, corresponds to the order of nature, and is nowhere better or more beautifully exemplified than in Kensington Gardens every April.

So far as we have been able to discover, there is only a single line devoted to the birch. It is to be found in "Amphion," that singular reproduction, in sylvan form, of the mythological legend. It is interesting to notice, by the way, that, in the later editions, the verse in which the birch is mentioned is omitted, and another substituted. As a whole the latter is doubtless the more musical of the two, but we are sorry to lose the apt and charming characterization of "the lady of the woods." For the curious in Tennysonianism we print both:—

"The birch-tree swang her fragrant hair,
The bramble cast her berry,
The gin within the juniper
Began to make him merry."
* * * *

"The linden broke her ranks and rent
The woodbine wreaths that bind her,
And down the middle, buzz! she went
With all her bees behind her."

Of all the poets who have sung the praises of the birch, Coleridge,

good :—

“Where weeps the birch with silver bark,
And long dishevelled hair.”

“Dishevelled,” implying disorders and entanglement, does not convey a correct idea of the foliage of the birch. “Swang her fragrant hair,” is decidedly better.

The fulness and ripeness of the poet's knowledge of trees is amply illustrated in those passages of his poems relating to the poplar. This is a tree with which he has been familiar from early childhood, as we gather from the “Ode to Memory,” where he fondly recalls—

“The seven elms, the poplars four,
That stand beside my father's door.”

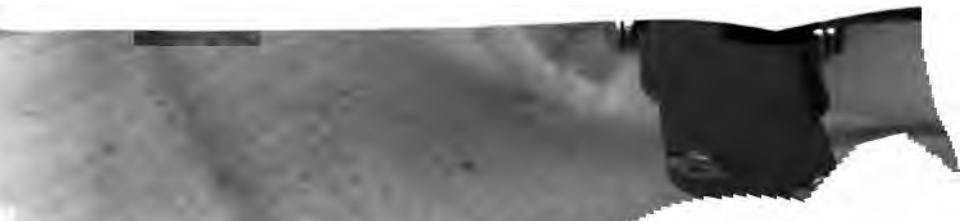
The famous poplar in “Mariana,” which Mr. Read has reproduced in his fine picture of the “Moated Grange,” now at South Kensington, is a prominent object in a very striking poem. The locality, it is scarcely necessary to say, is the fen country :—

“About a stone-cast from the wall
A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.
Hard by a poplar shook alway,
All silver-green with gnarled bark ;
For leagues no other tree did mark
The level waste, the rounding gray.”

As an example of landscape painting in words there is nothing more perfect than this in modern literature. We are not aware if the doubt was ever suggested before, but we think it is at least questionable if Mr. Read is right in assuming the particular tree in the poem to be a Lombardy poplar. “Silver-green,” a remarkable epithet, is more applicable to the abele or white poplar than to the fastigiate Lombardy species, and the sound of the trembling of the leaves is less noticeable in the latter than in most of the other poplars. In other poems this rustling noise is described as “lispering,” “hissing,” and like the sound of “falling showers,” phrases all tolerably approximating to exactness. In “In Memoriam” there is a special reference to this white poplar whose silver-green foliage shows much more white than green in a gale of wind :—

“With blasts that blow the poplar white,
And lash with storm the streaming pane.”

The “quivering,” “tremulous” aspen is also mentioned, but Mr.



Tennyson is too good a botanist to fall into the popular error of supposing that it is the only tree which has fluttering leaves. Except the Ontario species and one or two others, nearly all the poplars have the same peculiarity, caused, it may not be superfluous to say, by the compression of the leaf-stalk. Very curious it is to notice in the upper branches, while a light wind is overhead, each particular leaf shaking on its own account, while the branch of which it is a part, and the tree itself, are perfectly motionless.

Of the beech the notices are scantier and less specific. Its peculiarly twisted roots, rich autumn tints, smooth bark, and unusual leafiness, are all described, however, more or less poetically. The following verse from "In Memoriam" has a certain pensive sweetness of its own :—

"Unwatch'd, the garden bough shall sway,
The tender blossom flutter down,
Unloved that beech will gather brown,
This maple burn itself away."

The rich autumn tints of the foliage of the maple are here alluded to.

Cedars, cypresses, and yews, all members of the great coniferous family, are prominent objects in Mr. Tennyson's landscapes. In the eighteenth section of "Maud," beginning,

"I have led her home, my love, my only friend,"

and which contains some passages full of solemn tenderness and beauty, and a splendour of language worthy of Shakespeare himself, occurs the oft-quoted apostrophe addressed to the cedar of Lebanon by Maud's somewhat distempered, though now happy lover :—

"O, art thou sighing for Lebanon
In the long breeze that streams to thy delicious East,
Sighing for Lebanon,
Dark cedar. * * *
* * * * *
"And over whom thy darkness must have spread
With such delight as theirs of old, thy great
Forefathers of the thornless garden, there
Shadowing the snow-limbed Eve from whom she came.
Here will I lie, while these long branches sway."

The yew, though usually regarded as the emblem of death :—

"Cheerless, unsocial plant, that loves to dwell
Midst skulls and coffins, epitaphs and tombs,"

might, in its extreme tenacity and length of days, be a fitter representative of life and endurance. In the second chapter of "In Memoriam" the yew is described in the most masterly manner. These are two of the verses :—

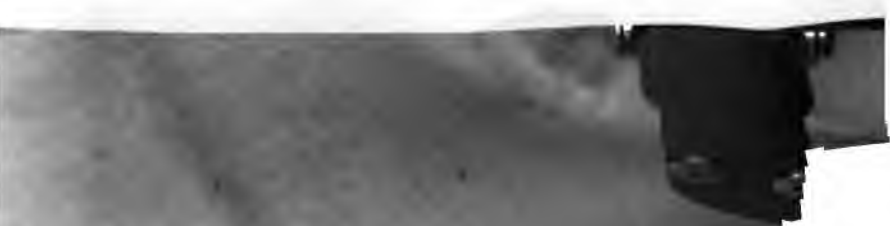
My roots are wrapt about the bones.
"O not for thee the glow, the bloom,
Who changest not in any gale,
Nor branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom."

The locality, the hue, the prolonged life, and the general unchangeableness of appearance, are all here summarily noticed. The Laureate seems, however, to share the popular dislike to this tree, a feeling which Gilpin, in his "Forest Scenery," ridicules as weakness. In "Amphion," yews are called "a dismal coterie;" in "Maud" a "black yew gloomed the stagnant air;" and in "Love and Death," we have the portentous image of the angel of death walking all alone "beneath a yew."

Our limits forbid more than a mere enumerative mention of other well-known trees, whose memory Mr. Tennyson has rendered sweeter to all future generations of tree lovers. "Immemorial elms," "perky larches and pines," "laburnums, dropping-wells of fire," elders, hollies, "the pillared dusk of sounding sycamores," "dry-tongued laurels," "slender acacias"—all these and many others are to be found within the four corners of his poems. One only remains, the oak—"sole king of forests all," and as Mr. Tennyson has celebrated the praises of the monarch of the woods at great length in the "Talking Oak," we shall add a few words on that charming composition by way of conclusion.

As is well known, the poem takes the form of a colloquy between an ancient oak, which formed a meeting-place for two lovers, and the young gentleman in the case. He comes to question the tree about his lady-love, who had visited the hallowed spot in his absence. And Landor himself, in his happiest vein, never conceived a more exquisite imaginary conversation. Here, in sportive phrase and bantering talk, is the whole philosophy of forest life set forth with a poetic felicity, saucy humour, and scientific precision of language, each admirable of its kind. The poem is literally a love idyll and botanic treatise combined, and never, surely, were love and science—January and May, might one say, so delightfully harmonized, conveying, too, to those who have eyes to see and hearts to understand, glimpses of a spiritual interpretation of nature, undreamt of by Pope and his school. Thus pleasantly does the old oak of "Summer-Chace" discourse to Walter of Olivia's charms; and the reader will not fail to notice the skilful way in which the poet's practical acquaintance with trees is turned to account:—

"I swear (and else may insects prick
Each leaf into a gall)



and then, with a warmth of praise unusual and almost improper in such a venerable inhabitant of the forest, he continues :—

“ Her kisses were so close and kind,
That, trust me on my word,
Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,
But yet my sap was stirred :

“ And even into my inmost ring
A pleasure I discern’d,
Like those blind motions of the Spring,
That show the year is turn’d.”

Farther on, the not ungrateful lover invokes all atmospheric and other good influences on his partner in the dialogue, who has proved so communicative a companion :

“ O rock upon thy towery top
All throats that gurgle sweet !
All starry culmination drop
Balm-dews to bathe thy feet !
* * * * *

“ Nor ever lightning char thy grain,
But, rolling as in sleep,
Low thunders bring the mellow rain,
That makes thee broad and deep !”

These, it will be admitted, are very melodious strains. Seldom has the imagery of the woods been used with more appropriateness and effect than in this poem, and its poetic excellence is rivalled by its accuracy. No one but an accomplished practical botanist could have written it. And throughout the poem, light and airy in tone as it is, there is distinctly perceptible the scientific element,—the sense of the forces of nature acting according to law, which, as we have already said, pervades like a subtle essence much of Mr. Tennyson’s poetry. But enough has probably been said to justify the title of this article.

J. HUTCHISON.

THE AMBUSCADE.

ONCE more I dreamed a dream, in gentler wise :

Methought I found One reap a deep-grassed stead,—

An old, old, toil-worn man, with fore-locked head,
Through coverts watched by countless gem-like eyes.

And, as I looked, I heard soft song-words rise,

And, 'twixt thick leaves, a citole's music shed,—

The while no whit that scyther spared to spread
The swath to side, and, armed in age, defies

The stealing strain. But notes on notes, like pearls,

Poured on the air—a charm of chime and rhyme
Through all moods wound—till e'en that hoary churl's

Dull sense, o'erborne, must mark the sovran mime :

Then broke pre-concert of a thousand girls,

Shrilling at one,—“Lo ! Love hath vanquished Time.”

AUSTIN DOBSON.

MORE WISDOM OF THE ANCIENTS.

ATALANTA, OR THE STRONG-MINDED WOMAN.

Atalanta, the Poets fable, was nurtured by a Bear upon the Mountains. Which rough Cradling did so string her Thews and breed within her an indomitable Courage, that they who would fain have been her Lovers did perish by her Shafts; and Heroes at the Funeral Games of *Pelias* were thrown by her in wrestling.


And, indeed, she was of so vain-glorious a mind and proud a stomach, that him only she would take for Husband who should outrun her. And she being armed did slay many who were vanquished in the race, though Law and Odds were given them; and cutting off their heads, she set them up as trophies of her Triumph.

But at the last her Cousin beguiled her by his craft, for, casting down the Golden Apples which the *Queen of Love* had given him, *Milanion* sped onwards to the goal, whiles the haughty maiden lingered to gather up the precious Fruit, and thus was mulcted by his Subtlety both of her Victory and of her Virgin Pride. This Fable elegantly sheweth the Fate of Women who suffer Hardship, and submit unto the Contumely of Bearish Men, to the end that at the last they may make him who arrogantly vaunteth himself Lord and Master, bow the neck and crook the knee, his own Weapons having been wrenched from his weak hands, and turned to his Discomfiture.

But *Dis aliter visum est*, the End is otherwise. There cometh a Suiter who bringeth both Love and Gold, and the fiercest *Atalanta* of them all, declining from her Lonely Loftiness doth bewray herself Mere Woman.

EUROPA, OR JOHN BULL.

The tale of *Europa*, though common, had never the fortune to be fitly applied. 'Tis said that she wandered gathering flowers of Sweetest Scent, and Colours more diverse than the Hues of Juno's Bird, which the cunning craftsman had carven on her Golden Cophinus; and with her went a Choir of fair Companions. When to them, from the Sea, uprose a Lovely Bull, and having looked on him, *Europa* foregat her flowers. His low was as the sound of a Mydonian Flute; his eyes were bright, yet soft, like unto the Evening Star; and when he bent his knee and showed his brawny back, *Europa* must needs seat herself thereon. She bade farewell unto her Friends, being enamoured of the lovely bull, and fixing her Desires upon his Grace, and her Faith upon his Gracious Wisdom, she went forth with him whithersoever he might fare. The



Poet doth herein foretell by Parable the preheminance of Favour which the Englishman findeth at the hands of them of other Countries; how *Europa*, which ('tis a trite School-boy Text) figureth the continent, being smitten by his Comeliness and gay Lightsomeness of Youth, and having Trust without limit in his Truth, and Reverence for his Ready Valour on behalf of all that be oppress'd; and, moreover, being, as it were, intoxicated with the Odour of his Courtesy, which doth breathe forth on all like unto the scent of Flowers beneath the Sun, hath made for him a *Benjamin's mess* of Loving-kindness, reserved unto him alone, and tasted by none other.

APOLLO, OR THE LONG VACATION.

'Tis but a Toy, yet I will tell it. The Sophist *Himerius* relates that *Jove* gave unto *Apollo* a Headband and a Team of Swans, wherewith he went unto the *Hyperboreans*, whose Custom is to offer Asses in Sacrifice; and having given Laws unto the *Hyperboreans*, the god came back in Summer, and went abroad basking in the sunshine, listening unto the Singing of Birds, and the shrill Cicadas, and lying down to Rest, with Pipe in hand, beside the silver Streams.

What is he but a Judge, who doth too oft forget that his office is *Jus dicere*, and not *Jus dare*; *To interpret law*, and not to *make law*, or *give law*? And what is the Headband but the Wig, and the team of Swans but the Grey Horses of the Sheriff? And by the *Hyperboreans* the *Northern Circuit* may be figured, since 'tis the manner of the men of those Parts to show small pity unto Asses. And the rest, of the Birds and sunny Baskings with the Pipe, should seem to point unto Idling after Circuit, which he hath good right to enjoy whose Wits have been wearied by Dealings with the *Hyperboreans*.

ÆSCULAPIUS, OR THE DOCTOR.

They say that the son of *Coronis* arrived at so great perfection in the Healing Art that *Pluto*, robbed of his revenues, complain'd to *Jove*, who thereupon smote the presumptuous Innovator with his Bolt.

'Tis a playful story, setting forth forcibly the Vulgar Belief that the Proper Function of the chirurgion is to Kill, and that he is thunderstruck—*attonitus*, astonied—when he doth Cure.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE MINX'S VICTIM.

"There was a little couple once—
The girl a wit, the boy a dunce."

FRANK Noel had given Mr. Carington a humorous account of his uncle the Canon's infatuation with the Minx, of her amazing airs and graces, of Laurence the butler's intense indignation, of his own perplexity as to what to do. As the Canon improved, his belief in the perfections of Miss Wilkinson grew manifestly stronger: he treated her quite as if he desired her to be mistress of his household, and she put on so fine a manner in consequence that she amused Frank at least as much as she irritated him. On fine afternoons, dressed with radiant inelegance, she would walk abroad among the ladies of the Close, who were wont to gather like a social flock of lovely birds, and talk a mixture of fashion and ecclesiastism. The latest bonnet or heresy, or anthem or elopement, was sure to be canvassed—the old Cathedral, with its sky-pointing spire, had known as many generations of these gay chatterers at its feet, as of the sabler-coated birds that cawed by hundreds around its miraculous summit. Miss Gertrude Wilkinson ventured on the same pavement at the same hour with a defiant eye and bearing; she was one of those young women who feel a curious mixture of envy and contempt for their betters; she could see in the ladies of the Close an air of superiority which put her in a rage; at the same time she fully believed herself much handsomer than any of them, and much better dressed. Could she have heard Basil Longhurst, the Bishop's nephew and secretary, who (being young, brilliant, and a bachelor) was in great request among the ladies of the Close, say what he thought of her personal appearance, she would have wished to assassinate him.

"Who in the world is that woman?" he asked his pretty cousin Ada . . . by the way, it is astonishing what pretty daughters bishops usually have. "How ugly she is! And how hideously she dresses!"

"O, she is only a nurse or something, employed to look after poor dear Canon Lovelace."

"I shouldn't like her to nurse me. She looks as if she ought to be known to the police. By the way, I have not seen Frank since we

Basil called on his old schoolfellow, and found he did not like it at all. Frank, who while looking after his uncle longed to be elsewhere, was whimsically angry with this young woman, and made Basil laugh heartily by the tale of his troubles. They smoked a cigar together in Frank Noel's sitting-room, which looked upon the Close. As they stood at the window, the Bishop's secretary said,—

"That's a suspicious-looking scoundrel that is lurking there by the railings, Noel. Looks quite ready for a burglary—and there's good store of plate within a few hundred yards."

"I have seen that fellow lounging about the place for some days," said Frank; "but, having no great store of plate myself, I thought little about it."

"It's a clear case for the police," said the energetic young secretary. "Come, it's a pleasant afternoon for a walk: let us take a stroll, and I'll drop in upon Scudamore, our chief constable, and give him what he would call the 'office'—without imagining he was using a classic idiom."

Basil was apt to "drop in" upon people: and, thinking himself the real moving spirit of the diocese, he went everywhere with equal coolness.

As the two young men turned out of the door into the Canon's ivy-covered archway, they saw Miss Gertrude Wilkinson hastily crossing. It seemed to both of them as if she had spoken to this seedy person who had raised their curiosity. She suddenly started as they came out of the dim archway.

"Queer!" said the quick-eyed Basil.

"O, I dare say she only gave him a copper," said Frank.

"She hardly looks a model of generosity. Never mind, we'll ask Scudamore."

The worthy chief constable received Mr. Basil (as all Sarum called him) with great deference, was most polite to Mr. Basil's friend, and promised that the young feller should be watched and ordered to move on.

The very same evening Frank strolled out to smoke a solitary cigar under the full moon, and think of the mysterious and beautiful Elinor, of whom indeed he seemed to think more and more the longer he was kept away from her. Frank was that very rare thing, a sensible lover; he saw that to marry he must give up lounging, and take to a career; he saw that he could not marry a mystery without a name. Whether Elinor was above or below him in rank, he cared not: as Mr. Carington was her patron and adviser he felt the strong probability that she was of some importance. To ponder these

things he prepared to go forth ; slowly descended the wide low winding stairway ; carefully lighted his cigar at the lamp by the door that opened on the archway ; then went out. There was a sudden rustling sound. Two figures were perceptible. One was Miss Gertrude Wilkinson : she ran in as Frank came out, and rushed upstairs with a flushed face ; while her companion, shuffling out of the archway, made his way along the pavement of the Close with rather a feeble mimicry of speed. Frank could easily keep him in sight without discomposure, having a stride to which a mile in twelve minutes was not at all afflicting. The Minx's friend was evidently the lurking rascal whom Basil had marked down. Frank followed him into the market-place, and saw him turn into a small tavern called the *Oak*. He followed at once, entered with no sign of haste, found his quarry changing a sovereign and ordering gin-and-water, hot and strong. The bar was warm and cosy ; the stout landlord was the sole person present ; the walls were hung with prints of race-horses and prize-fighters, announcements of athletic sports and of raffles. The landlord, a tall strong fellow, was a retired pugilist and cricketer, reputed the best fisherman in the city of the four rivers, Dan Parr by name. Although the pugilist's profession is not a humanizing one, Dan had not been brutalized by it altogether—perhaps because, better than even a fight, he loved a long day at cricket, and better than either to wile trout from the Wiley. Dan Parr's house was the resort of all kinds of customers, from the noble and liberal agents who came to the races down to the casual tramp who has just changed a sovereign. He was surprised at no arrival.

Frank Noel ordered a glass of pale ale, and got a very good one. Then, looking at the landlord, whom he seemed dimly to recollect, he remembered that the "Grammar School Club" had employed him as a professional bowler years before. He thought it odd that Parr did not remember him : the truth being that he did remember perfectly, but had a sort of proud shyness which prevented his making the first recognition of a gentleman.

Frank smoked and drank his ale and watched the man opposite him, who presently began to talk rather glibly, the gin-and-water having stimulated his brain. He called for more grog, which was supplied ; he affably remarked to Frank that Salisbury was a dull stuck-up one-horse sort of a place. Frank acknowledged its dullness, and expressed surprise that a person who had seen so much of the world could care to visit it.

"O, there's a lady in the case," he said. "Nothing else would have brought me to a town full of parsons."

"A lady in the case !" cried Frank, in a tone of intense interest. "Landlord, bring a bottle of champagne, and we'll have it in your private parlour, if we may, and I dare say this gentleman will tell me some of his adventures."

in brag and ended in maudlin, would be intolerably tedious: it lasted some hours, and Frank and his seedy guest, aided now and then by Dan Parr, drank several bottles of champagne. The upshot of Frank's inquiry must be given in brief narrative.

Jacob Cookson, at one time articulated pupil at the middle class academy of David Wilkinson, Ph.D., LL.D. of certain Teutonic universities: this was the young gentleman now on the tramp. Dr. Wilkinson was a clever man with a smattering of everything, and a method of displaying what little he knew so as to make people believe he knew more. Nothing taught at the school worth teaching; nothing to eat worth eating; as ample compensation, no corporal punishment. A boy couldn't be birched or tunded at Wilkinson's: but he could be kept for a week on bread and water and very little of it.

Miss Gertrude Wilkinson (real name Jane), a florid young woman seven years older than himself. Managed everything for her widower-father; looked after the little boys and the big boys; looked after him more than anybody. He was handsome then—(he was in the maudlin stage, and wept over the ruins of his decayed though not extinguished beauty). One thing clear from the story, that the Minx had taught him what schools were not intended to teach; that she had gone too fast and too far; and that a child had been born . . . before which, however, she had left her father. What had become of the child, this Jacob Cookson knew not nor cared. What he did care to know was that Miss Wilkinson, at first probably by her father's aid, got a situation as nursery governess in a clergyman's family, that her exemplary piety had obtained for her quite an ecclesiastical connexion, and that she now had so good a situation that she could always spare a pound or two.

The champagne had pretty well done for Jacob Cookson by the time he had reached the end of his story: and so late had it grown that Frank saw signs of daylight through the window. He left Cookson and went to Parr, who was half asleep by his smouldering fire.

"Dan," he said, "you remember me, I'll swear, though you never said a word when I came in."

"Lord yes, Mr. Frank, of course I do—worst muff at long stop I ever saw."

"Thank you, Dan: but I could bowl, you know. Look here: I want you to do something for me, and will give you a sovereign for your trouble. See that that fellow doesn't leave the house till I come in the morning. I shall be here by ten, I hope, and bring Piffniger with me. It is very important."

"Right you are," said the landlord. "He shall be here."

"It's too late to turn in now," thought the landlord. "They'll soon be here for the early purl. I'll make up the fire and brew myself some, to keep me awake."

Frank, walking slowly home, with intent to take a bath and change his clothes, and catch Pinniger at breakfast, pondered much of middle-class academies, marvelling whether they often produced such tutors and such minxes. Why, if any writer had courage enough to show the evils that follow from the fact that any fool or knave may set up a school for either sex without examination or licence, what revelations would there be! The uneducated masters, cruel and mean; the stealthy sneaks of ushers; the scrofulous girls, daughters, nieces, wardrobe women, who are ready for any wickedness—it is too sickening a theme for minute description. Let us leave it to some one who will make a severe analysis—and who at the same time may inquire into the condition of the young women who, too proud for housemaids, and too dull for governesses, assume piety as a profession, impose on unsuspecting young curates, and become deaconesses or sisters of some sort.

Frank Noel let himself in, took his bath, dressed leisurely, and, coming down to the breakfast room at eight, found Laurence busy in preparation, and got an early cup of coffee.

"Your uncle's coming down to luncheon to-day, Mr. Frank," says the butler, "so I hope you'll be at home."

"Ay, that I will, Laurence," he said, cheerfully. "I have something to surprise him with. Good bye. I'm going to breakfast with Mr. Pinniger."

His legal friend quite agreed in the advisability of Frank's proposal, which was this: to take Cookson to the lawyer's office, have his statement drawn up in an intelligible form, and cause him to sign it in the presence of witnesses—then to show it to the Canon, if the old gentleman seemed well enough to bear it. The arrangements were made promptly: Cookson, who saw the chance of a few immediate sovereigns, told his story over again, and substantiated it by his signature. Dan Parr was then instructed to take him in charge, and have him waiting at Canon Lovelace's at one precisely. Frank and Pinniger picked up Basil Longhurst in the Palace Garden, where he was dreaming of lawn-sleeves in the future. He was delighted at the little explosion.

Frank went home half an hour before luncheon, and found his uncle in high spirits. The Minx was with him, and obviously resolute not to leave, so Frank could only go so far as to ask him whether he was well enough to receive Pinniger and Longhurst at luncheon.

"Basil has been longing to come and see you, sir," he said.

"Basil is my great favourite," said the Canon. "I am glad you and he are such friends. I wish you would follow his example."

It was a great desire of the Canon's to see his nephew in Holy Orders.

"Well, uncle," said Frank, "the choice of a career is a thing on which I want your advice very much. But do you think you are strong enough to receive our two friends?"

"O dear yes, they will cheer me. Tell them yes: and as you go down, send up Laurence."

Frank Noel right willingly obeyed; he knew that order meant a choicer wine than usual: and, as there was an explosion in expectancy, he was glad to see the Canon in high spirits and good humour.

The hour came, and the guests. A pleasant fire blazed in the hearth, and lighted up the Canon's thoughtful humorous face and scanty hair of snow. The three young men who greeted his first arrival in his favourite room, were all beloved by him: Pinniger, as a lawyer, honest and intelligent, descendant of a race of chivalrous lawyers; Basil, as a brilliant young leader of the Church Militant, already dreaded by heretics and nonconformists, and booked for Lambeth as safely as if he had been mitrogenitus; chief of all, Frank Noel, his own blood, his own boy, to whom he thought it his duty to make amends for all the shortcomings of his father, the Captain. Very pleasant was the converse, but the Minx, who sat next Canon Lovelace, watched him, and waited upon him most assiduously. She saw clearly that her position was a false one; she determined, however, to hold it if possible. The species minx have a great belief in old men's weakness.

The Canon, however, was getting strong; renewed health made his sight keener, and he could perceive that this handmaiden of his was not quite what he liked; the gay talk of his young friends brightened him. He said by-and-by:—

"Laurence, another bottle of Madeira. Miss Wilkinson, as we may sit some time, you need not stay."

As the butler opened the door for the Minx, both their faces were studies. Miss Wilkinson went off with a fling, like a rather florid peri cast out of Paradise; while Laurence, who had an expression of countenance not unlike Mr. Buckstone's, made Frank almost choke with laughter by silently forming the word *Minx* upon his lips.

When the Madeira had arrived, and the four gentlemen were alone, Pinniger said,—

"Mr. Lovelace, there is a little matter of business I should like to mention to you. May I?"

"By all means," replied the Canon, "to do business with you, Pinniger, is always a pleasure."

"Thank you, sir. This, which shall be as brief as possible, con-

not trouble you, while in my heart, with suspicions, so he made a private investigation, which resulted in this document, signed and attested in my office about an hour ago."

Pinniger rose and placed the paper before the Canon, who, without saying a word, raised his old-fashioned gold-rimmed eyeglasses, and read it carefully. Having done so, he said,—

"All this looks probable, and is not pleasant. When I was very weak, this young woman had a strong influence over me; now that I am in better health, I cannot say that I judge her favourably. Still, is it certain that this man, Cookson, is not inventing anything?"

"He is waiting below, ready to confront her," said Pinniger.

"That is enough, I think," said the Canon, "without any scene. Although I am wonderfully better, I avoid unnecessary excitement. Give me your opinion, Pinniger."

"You would like her to leave to-day?"

"Certainly, I should."

"Let me calculate what is due to her. Write a cheque. I, as your attorney, will obtain her receipt, and see that she is gone within the hour."

This being agreed to, the lawyer went in immediate search of the Minx, whom he found sitting in a mood of sulky rage beside the fire. When he entered, she rose at once, but with a doubtful expression of countenance. Perhaps he had come away quietly from the company to find her and flirt with her. Charming idea! Her sulks changed to smiles; she looked her loveliest; Pinniger was quite amused by the sudden transformation.

"Miss Wilkinson," he said, before she could say anything, "I am Canon Lovelace's attorney. He wishes you to leave to-day, and I have brought you his cheque for the amount which will be due to you."

There was another revolution, from allurement to fury, in the Minx's countenance.

"Leave to-day!" she exclaimed fiercely. "This is false; I will hear it from his own lips. I was engaged by the quarter."

"You will find the payment made includes the additional quarter's wages," said Pinniger, coolly.

"But why am I to leave? *Why?* I will know this. My character shall not be ruined. It is that insolent Mr. Noel's doing, I swear."

"Do you really wish to know why you are to leave?" he said, with exasperating coolness; "I would not ask, if I were you."

"I insist on knowing," she said, emphatically.

"Very well. Keep your temper, and you shall know. It is because you, Jane Wilkinson, have been seen in company with a

for her. She saw that neither fury nor tears would move this imperturbable lawyer. She haughtily said,—

"I did not expect insult. I will leave as soon as my luggage can be got ready."

"It is the best you can do," said Pinniger. "First be so kind as to write me a receipt for this cheque . . . Thank you."

When she had swept out of the room, he rang for Laurence, told him to see that her packing was quickly accomplished, and to let him know when she went. This done he returned to the luncheon-room, where he found a pleasant conversation going on about Frank's future career.

For the Canon, over the old Madeira, had humorously commenced the subject, saying,—

"Basil, I want my lazy nephew to adopt a profession. Don't you think it is time? Why should he not take ours?"

Frank quietly sipped his wine, awaiting his friend's opinion. Basil said,—

"I never quite thought Frank cut out for a parson, sir. Wouldn't the army suit him better?"

"War is illogical," said Frank.

"Well, the law, then," said the Canon, "which is the perfection of logic. Pinniger would coach you: in time the firm might become Pinniger and Noel."

"O, Frank would like the bar," said Basil.

"I don't think I should like either," said Frank Noel. "Pinniger's a good fellow, but he's an exception to most lawyers, in my mind. As to barristers, who find eloquence to defend rascals, I wouldn't be one if I were sure of the Woolsack."

"You're uncommonly difficult to suit, Frank," said the Canon. "Are you fit for nothing, or fit for everything? What would you really like to be?"

Frank Noel looked wise, and filled his glass with Madeira.

"My ambition," he said, "is not high. To be an Archbishop or Lord Chancellor or Commander-in-Chief is not to my mind, even if it were not necessary to begin as a curate or a briefless barrister or an ensign."

"I see what it is," quoth Basil: "you want to keep a shop and sell something."

"I'd rather be a fruiterer or a fishmonger than a lawyer," he said. "Better have a bright-scaled salmon on a marble slab for sale, or soft-cheeked peaches in the midst of green leaves, than a lot of musty opinions on parchment, designed to make honest men poor and rascals rich."

country gentleman, with a pleasant house, and a deerpark, and lots of rich farms, and a few villages to look after, and a chance of making many people happy: but as I can't be that, I think I shall take a small farm, and see if I can't live comfortably upon it; I have already talked to Pinniger about it. What do you think, uncle?"

"I think a country life the best of lives," the Canon had begun, as Pinniger entered and said,—

"It is all settled, sir. I have the woman's receipt."

And then he related what had happened. While they were talking they heard a fly draw up outside, and Laurence came in to tell Pinniger the young woman was going down. The lawyer walked to the turn of the staircase, wishing to see her fairly off. In another minute a scuffle was heard below: Frank and Basil went to the window and looked out; Pinniger rushed down into the archway.

By misadventure Dan Parr had not been told that Cookson was not wanted: so he stood as staunchly to his post as if he had been wicket-keeping—the luckless Cookson shivering beside him, weakened by his debauch. Miss Wilkinson had ordered a fly to convey her to the station, having resolved to shake the dust off her fair feet against the too-moral city. Her luggage was on its roof. She descended stately and contemptuous, and came through the archway. Stalwart Dan Parr, lazily smoking a short pipe, was keeping his eye on Cookson the disreputable. The sight of Cookson seriously disturbed the equilibrium of the Minx's mind. She forgot her hauteur.

"Wretch!" she exclaimed, rushing at him with such fierceness that in a moment they were both in the mud, under the horse's feet, she tugging at his hair. The horse was a mild quadruped fortunately, and only turned his head to see if he could catch a glimpse of the fracas under his blinker.

"Queer start!" said Dan Parr, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, and putting it in his pocket with no haste. Then he stooped; took the young person up in a kind of bunch; kicked Cookson out of the horse's way; shoved Miss Wilkinson into the cab; banged the door; and told the flyman to drive on. Turning round and seeing Mr. Pinniger, he touched his hat, and said,

"Queer start, sir."

Then he walked homewards, lighting his pipe again as he went. The poor devil, Cookson, feebly picked himself up, and followed at a distance.

Such was Miss Gertrude Wilkinson's ignominious retreat from Sarum. If one could trace the future of this girl and her victim, in what hospital or workhouse should we find them?

The Canon had not left his chair, but Frank had given him a brief account of what was going on, and the old gentleman saw reason to be thankful that he had lost his attendant. Pinniger filled up the outline, and caused great laughter by his dramatic account of Dan Parr as *Deus ex machina*.

"We promised him a sovereign for his trouble," said Frank.

"Give him five," said the Canon: "Pinniger, you'll see to that for me. I owe him something for promptly putting a stop to a row of that kind at my door."

Soon after, Basil Longhurst and Pinniger took leave. The Canon was evidently in a talkative mood. He dwelt slowly on his old Sercial. He said to Frank:—

"I wish you could be a country gentleman, my boy: but, as you cannot, I think your notion of being a farmer is good. You have enough to start with: one of these days you will get a trifle more from me."

"I expect nothing," he said, "and I'd rather you wouldn't talk of what will be a terrible loss to me. I am a careless fellow, uncle, I know: but I always think of you, even when I don't write letters. I do hate writing letters."

"So do I," said the Canon. "I'm glad to think you're fond of me, Frank—and I'm glad to find you have been steady and quiet, with all your carelessness."

"No virtues of mine, sir, either of them. If there were more uncles like you, it would improve the breed of nephews. As to being quiet and steady, the truth is I *like* being quiet. I never could understand the fun of vulgarity. I have always put it down to my own dullness that I felt melancholy when everybody else was amused. So you must not praise me, uncle, for what is probably mere slowness of disposition."

The Canon smiled.

Frank resumed, with a kind of diffident earnestness—

"I have chosen one vocation already, uncle. I am in love."

"In love?"

"Most thoroughly, I assure you, sir: and with a mysterious girl whom I met by accident when I was at Lord Delamere's, and who doesn't know her own name—her surname I mean."

The Canon looked at him amusedly, holding up his eye-glasses for the purpose.

"Tell me the whole story, Frank."

Frank told it all—not forgetting the escapade at the little inn, at which the Canon laughed heartily—or Prince Oistravieff's libel and punishment, at which he looked humorously grave.

"Of course you ought to marry her, Frank, after sleeping at her bedroom door . . . but then the canons of the church make no provision for marrying nameless people. By the way, has she a Christian name?"

is she still at Delamere?

"Yes, uncle."

"And you consider her a good girl and a true lady?"

"Upon my word," said Frank, "it is hard for a dull fellow like me to say what I think of her. I want to tell you, but can't. When I am with her I feel stronger, braver, wiser. When we are silent together she seems to be teaching me something strange and beautiful. She isn't at all a saint, a professional saint I mean; but she is so much like a saint that you feel nobody could do anything wrong in her presence. Yet she sings like a bird, and is as wild as the wind. Then her cool little hand, long-fingered, with a flush of rose . . . and her eyes, that look through you though themselves too deep to fathom . . . and her——"

"Don't mention lips, Frank," said the Canon. "This becomes serious. You really appear to be in love. What says the lady?"

"I think it's all right, sir, though she makes fun of love and of me. Yes, I think I am safe."

"And she is Carington's ward, or something of the sort? If so, she is a lady: and if so, he will clear up the mystery for you. He has been clearing up mysteries all his life. You had better be off to Delamere at once, and question him, and settle it with her."

"Thanks, uncle, but I cannot leave you yet—especially as you have no one now to attend on you."

"No more young persons for me, Master Frank," said Canon Lovelace. "One specimen suffices. Laurence can take good care of me: he knows my ways and my wines: if I feel less well I'll send for you. Be off. Go to-night, I am interested in your romance. Write and tell me all about it. Remember me heartily to Carington."

The kind old Canon thus dismissed his nephew, who was not slow to obey such an agreeable order of march. He told Laurence to get his traps ready, as he meant to sleep in London that night.

"Not going to fetch back that minx, sir, I hope?" says the butler, with a Buckstonian look.

Hasty leave took Frank of Basil and of Pinniger, postponing for the present all questions in regard to one or two fine farms his legal friend happened to know would soon be vacant. He found time to turn in at the *Oak*, and give Dan Parr thanks, and an additional tip, for his admirable conduct in reference to the Minx and her victim.

"Thankee, sir," says Dan. "It's too much. Why, lawyer Pinniger sent me a bit of paper, just now, from your uncle. It was a rum start."

"What's become of the young man?"

"Why," says Dan, "that's the rummest start of all. I thought I'd walk up to the railway, for there wasn't a train for ever so long, and pay my respects to my fine lady by seeing her off. I couldn't do less, as I'd hitched her off the road into the cab. She'd been to the waiting-room, and put herself in order, and was walking up and down just like the Queen of Sheba. She didn't look at dirt like me, you may suppose. By and by the train's got ready, and her luggage is put in, and she gets a first-class ticket, and walks up and down again, trying to decide which carriage she'll have . . . particular as to her company, no doubt. Presently, up comes a couple of young officers, jumps into an empty carriage . . . and by Jabers, Madam goes in after 'em."

"Thinks I : now they wanted to smoke, and they'll be savage, only when they look at her they'll think she's up to a lark . . . so they'll console themselves, and have their cigars after all."

"I'd no idea you were a philosopher, Dan."

"Nor I neither, Mr. Frank : but if that's philosophering, I soon had more to philosopher about . . . for just as the train begins to move, up rushes her seedy pal, jumps into the very same carriage, and sits down right opposite to her. I wondered what she thought . . . and I wondered what the two young officers thought. A queer start, Mr. Frank."

Frank Noel's impatience exciting him to carry out his uncle's commands, he got away in time to reach London late at night, and drove straight to one of the huge hotels by Euston terminus, and slept profoundly ; having made Dan Parr's champagne do the duty of sleep the night before.

In the morning he rose fresh as a lark, with dreams of Elinor brightening his untroubled eyes. O ! indomitable youth !

CHAPTER XXXIII.

LUCY WALTER.

Parish Clerk. Pray have you heard the scandal at the Rectory ?

Raphael. Well, on my honour, I'm surprised that you, my friend,

Being a dignitary ecclesiastical,

Should of the Church report a word that's scandalous.

The Comedy of Dreams.

THE Honourable and Reverend Charles Delamere, when he suddenly resolved to become a clergyman, was only giving another proof of the saying that extremes meet. If a highly respectable man goes wrong, he generally goes very wrong indeed : if a thorough ne'er-do-well is reformed, the reform is a miracle of completeness. In the latter

case, relapse is not impossible : but one never seems to hear of anybody's relapsing into respectability.

Mr. Delamere did not pursue his new vocation very long altogether, nor indeed very long in one place. Only one of his residences need here be noted. He saw in an ecclesiastical paper (of which there were far fewer then than now), an advertisement to the effect that the Rector of a thinly populated parish, in a beautiful neighbourhood, wished to find a *locum tenens* while he travelled for his health. He offered no stipend, but the use of the Rectory house, with well-stocked gardens, and shooting over some hundreds of acres. The place was described as near the sea, and there was the farther inducement that hounds met in the neighbourhood. The Honourable Charles went to see the place, and was delighted : there were about a dozen people in this parish of the west, and there was only one service in the week. The Rector had the right of shooting in the well-stocked preserves of the great landowner (his elder brother) to whom the whole place belonged. The Honourable Charles was in clover. The Rector kept a very complete establishment ; and, delighted to get an aristocratic representative, put even his wine-cellar at Mr. Delamere's disposal on very liberal terms.

When Mr. Delamere entered the fine old church to perform his first service, his congregation consisted of the Rectory household, a few keepers and their wives, the village blacksmith and tailor and baker, and some of those inevitable old women, who, in rural parishes, live to immense ages upon almost nothing. There was no upper stratum ; Mr. Delamere could not hear of a gentleman's house within a dozen miles. As he had been accustomed to the very thick of society, he found it rather dull of an evening : the day had its occupation, fishing, shooting, riding, which kept his mind occupied : but on lonely evenings, when a man has done questionable things, even being a parson will not prevent their coming back upon the memory. Mr. Delamere could think of no better way to exorcise his unpleasant thoughts than to amuse himself. The material was at hand in the form of a natty little parlour-maid, with inviting eyes, who was clearly quite ready to become a toy. What subsequently happened is too old a story to narrate in detail.

Mr. Carington, having with great difficulty conquered his friend's extreme unwillingness to do justice to Elinor, resolved to go farther and suggest that Lucy Walter, whose relation to the Earl he knew, should leave Delamere.

"Her position here," he said to the Earl, "is scarcely tenable. You *must* see that."

"Not quite," he replied. "Lucy is in her own eyes a servant : you know I insisted on her mother's keeping from her the secret of her birth. Elinor need never know the truth."

"Those things ooze out," said Mr. Carington, "women have sharp

Lucy is a good girl, and has been very useful to me, and I don't want to part with her. She has been here two years now, and knows my ways."

"Elinor will learn your ways fast enough," said Mr. Carington.

"O, I don't want to make a slave of Elinor: besides, she will soon be falling in love, if she hasn't already. And what am I to do with Lucy?"

"Where is her mother now? Is she living quietly?"

"She is in a cottage I gave her on my estate near Glastonbury: and my steward, who pays her annuity, reports that she is living quite respectably."

"Then, surely that is the proper place for Lucy to go. I should send her home to her mother at once: you can afterwards decide what sort of a provision you will make for her."

The Earl, white-haired, and bent, walking up and down the room by the aid of his ivory-headed staff, looked scarcely the man who should be discussing such a question as this: but the fire that still burnt in his eyes, and the compression of his firm lips, showed that he still possessed enormous energy. Mr. Carington could see by the movements of his face, that he hated the idea of letting Lucy leave him: and two or three minutes passed before he came to a decision. Then he said,—

"You are right, Carington, the child shall go. It is the wisest and kindest course. She had better be told at once."

"Don't let her persuade you to alter your mind. She is sure to be grieved to go."

"Yes, poor girl, but she won't make a fuss. She is the most obedient child I ever knew, and seems to have no will of her own."

"What a capital wife she will make!" said Mr. Carington.

Lucy being summoned, the Earl said:—

"Lucy, I am going to send you home to your mother for a time."

"O, my lord, I have offended you?"

"Not in the least," he said. "I have reasons which you cannot understand, for wishing you to be at home for a time. You have always been very good, and very quick, and very kind: I shall miss you a great deal; you must believe that this is necessary, Lucy, and don't fret about it. Besides, how glad your mother will be to see you after so long a time—and looking so much better and prettier!"

"I am sure what you decide is quite right, my lord; and I shall be very glad to see my mother; but I *am* sorry to go."

off early to-morrow, with somebody to take care of you, and some nice things for your mother."

Lucy, looking very sad, did not forget her coquettish curtsy as she left the room.

"A quaint little thing," said Mr. Carington. "Who would fancy her your child?"

"She is more her mother's than mine," he said. "All the time she has been here I have rather thought of her as a favourite servant than as a daughter: I have never had the fancy of giving her a paternal kiss. Now Elinor is a world more like me, though she is not my daughter: and I mean to keep her here so long as you will let me, Carington."

"I won't take her away; some young lover may, you know."

"Time enough for that," said the Earl.

"What says Shakespeare?"

'In delay there lies no plenty:

Then come kiss me, Sweet-and-Twenty!

Youth's a stuff will not endure.'

These young witches don't care to be a long time ripening."

"The worse for them. We all marry too young. That rascal Rollo did, you know."

"I do know it," said Mr. Carington, "and *you* know how glad I should have been to stop it."

"Well, yes, I think I do," and the Earl, who seldom laughed, laughed heartily. "You were rightly served, old friend. As for that wrong-headed Rollo, he was rightly served too."

"Poor old boy," said Carington. "He certainly was headstrong, and he has paid the penalty. What hundreds of our best Englishmen come to grief in foreign lands, because they *must* be in the midst of adventure."

"They do good," said the Earl. "*Sanguis Anglorum semen imperii*. Still I would rather it had been anybody except Rollo, badly as he treated us both."

Letters were brought in at this moment.

"There is one from your godson, Carington," says the Earl. "So far as I can understand his rather incoherent way of putting it, he will be here to-morrow-evening, too late for dinner. Well, Rachette shall give him a good supper, and they must send a carriage for him."

"I should like to astonish him with the little Marchesa when he

arrives. Don't you think that pretty prisoner might be let out?"

"Oh dear yes. I defy the tentacula of that political polypus to reach Langton Delamere. Make her come down to supper. I'll look in myself if I should feel as well as I do to-day."

As was customary when Mr. Carington entered the Marchesa's apartment, little white Tasso rushed at him fiercely, biting his trousers with tiny teeth. Then Mr. Carington rolled him over with his foot, and the little dog gambolled about so madly that it was impossible to discern head from tail. I think the dog and his mistress both liked Mr. Carington so well, that they were jealous of each other.

"Tasso!" she cried, "be quiet: you are a little nuisance. Come, Frank, what is your news? I can see you have some."

"You little Athenian——"

"Don't call names, sir; especially names I don't know the meaning of. Come, your news: I am dying for something in this dull place."

"Complimentary to you, Elinor," he said.

"O, Elinor is very nice: but I suppose you are aware that Elinor is a girl."

"I shall put you out of the way of harm presently," said Elinor.

"How is the Earl to-day, Mr. Carington?"

"He's growing young again," said Mr. Carington. "He talks of coming into Hall for supper to-morrow evening."

"Supper!" said Elinor, "what an unusual meal for Delamere."

"Ah, I like supper," cried the Marchioness; "at one or two, with men who can talk, and women who can sing; you two shall be of them. O, I have supped! I adore supper!"

"Well, will you come to supper in the Hall to-morrow? You can sing: the Earl and I can talk, and so can the visitor, for whom supper is to be prepared. I think it is quite safe for you."

"O no, no, no!" she cried, vehemently. "No, I will stay in my cage, with Tasso to guard me."

"What a guard!" said Mr. Carington, so soon as Tasso had finished the jubilant barks with which he received all mention of his own name. Attempts had been made to substitute equivalents, such as White Imp, Snowball, but he soon found them out, and barked just as wildly at each. "We have dogs in Hall big enough to take care of you: I mean you to come."

"Frank, I won't. It is a shame to frighten me. Perhaps that very visitor you talk of, is coming to kill me."

"I think it very likely from what I know of him. His name is Frank Noel."

Mr. Carington was looking as he spoke at Elinor, and saw what he expected, a blush and a smile.

"Why, that he might just as well fall in love with Tasso. What do you think, Elinor?"

"Why, sir, that he is a very steady young man, and not likely to fall in love at all."

"Oracular sentence; true to the letter," said Mr. Carington.

"What does she mean?" said the Marchesa; and pondered a little. Then she exclaimed, "O, I know, I know. He has fallen in love already, and will love steadily. Now you are found out, Elinor."

"Well, I must leave you in your cage, Raffaella," said Mr. Carington. "I am going for a ride."

"In this weather!" she exclaimed. "How dreadful!"

"Now, Elinor," said the Marchesa, "it will take all to-day and to-morrow for you to decide what you will wear when Mr. Noel comes."

"What nonsense, Raffaella! Mr. Noel is not in the habit of looking at dress."

"O he will look at you only! I see. But, my dear, take my advice, I am old and wise: men who don't look at dress are unconsciously influenced by it. Many ugly women have been married because they dressed well. Now I shall take you in hand: I shall dress you like a doll for this supper: we will call it the bridal supper."

"Upon my word, Raffaella, you are incorrigible. Of course I know that women ought to dress well: do I dress badly, then?"

"No," said the Marchesa, "not badly. You dress indeed gracefully and quietly: but I could introduce a coquetry, a ravishment, a caprice here and there, which would make Mr. Noel think Venus had given you her girdle while he was away."

"O dear me," quoth Elinor, "I shall have to submit, or you will talk me to death."

"That is an excuse," said Raffaella. "You know very well you like the idea. Ah, it will be amusement in this dull place. I am a baby dressing my doll. Not much material have we, I suppose: for me, I am desolate of dress, and must remain a snowball just now. Now, first come to my room, and I shall experiment on your hair. Why, you have the finest hair in the world, and you take no trouble to show it."

Leaving Elinor in front of a tall mirror, and the Marchesa pulling her superb hair over her shoulders, we follow Mr. Carington. He walked thoughtfully across the Hall, which was vacant and silent; no sound, except now and then the crackle of a log, or the yawn of a mastiff. He soliloquized.

"A grand place. I should like to see more life in it. For three generations it has been quiet and lonely: now there is no heir. This

hall might have been built for the sole comfort of the dogs." He was unconsciously speaking aloud, and a mastiff that lay at his feet looked up inquiringly. "No, old boy, I don't want you and your friends—stalwart sleepy fellows. I want to light up this old place, and by Jove it shall be done, if I can do it."

He passed across the Hall to a door through which access could be gained to the stables. He had to go through a small square courtyard, with fruit-trees on its walls: once a kitchen-garden, it had been paved when some alterations were made, and was only a place of passage: but the old fruit-trees remained, and bore beautifully, as Lucy Walter knew. Here, whither she had come in sunny autumn afternoons to pick a basket of peaches for the Earl, singing the while like a gay little bird that knows not the future, she now was walking rapidly up and down in the chill sunless weather, in her indoor costume, the effigy of despair.

"Lucy," said Carington, sharply.

She came up to him.

"What is this?"

"O, I am so unhappy, sir; I know I must have been naughty, or the Earl would not send me away."

"Did you not hear him say you were not? And dare you disbelieve the Earl? You are naughty now for the first time. Go in directly."

"Please don't tell Lord Delamere, sir: I am very sorry."

"I will not," he said more kindly. "Now, Lucy, go and sit down by your fire. You have to travel to-morrow, and you would not like to go home looking ill. If you want something to do, write a long letter to your mother. She will be glad to know that you have given the Earl satisfaction."

"Thank you, sir," she said, and obeyed.

"These girls and boys," thought Carington, "are difficult to manage; it's odd that an old bachelor like you, Master Frank, should have so many on his hands."

When he reached the stables, his horse was ready.

"Now, old roan," he said, patting his shoulder, "for a gallop over the fells: 'twill do your wind good, and my brain. What shall I do," he thought as he flew upward, "with the little Ravioli? She is my greatest perplexity. She is so frightened that I dare not leave her to herself. She'd marry me to-morrow, if I told her to: but no, no, Master Frank, don't throw away your freedom in your old age. Freedom, though! By Jove, though I haven't a wife, I seem to be the adopted father of several sons and daughters. Egad, I wish I saw some chance of settling Raffaella."

He had been breasting the fell through thick mist: when he reached the summit he was above it, and the sun was bright in a cloudless sky.

"A good omen," he thought.

The Marchesa, dressing her doll's hair, saw what seemed a giant horse and man going up through the mist.

"O what is that?" she cried, convulsively pulling one of Elinor's thick tresses with each hand.

"You little goose," between a laugh and a scream. "Only Mr. Carington on horseback. Have I got any hair left?"

"Yes, dear, a little. Don't you adore Mr. Carington?"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

LOVE'S LOADSTONE.

Raphael. But who the devil was my fellow-traveller?

Astrologos. Speak not too lightly of the devil, good my Lord,
The lowest whisper reaches that great potentate.

Raphael. Being his slave, you fear him, wretched star-gazer.
He is a dream.

The Comedy of Dreams.

Love's loadstone was in Strathclyde for Frank Noel. That magnetic influence, tugging so fiercely at the heart of man, does not accelerate the movements of railway trains. Verily if it could be made to act on things material, what a motive power it would be! Nothing could resist that miraculous energy which reunites, according to the old Greek theory (which came by way of Ægypt from Central Asia, birthplace of mankind), the two severed halves of a complete being—the only complete being God has created on this world. As God made man in His image, so all lower creatures are made in partial imitation of man, modern sophistry notwithstanding. The monkey has a mockery of his form; the dog has his courage and faith; the horse has his love of speed and adventure; the bird has his skyward aspiring and his love of song. And all, in ways widely differing, are drawn by love's loadstone.

Frank Noel's love had not spoilt his appetite: he ate an hotel breakfast without grumbling; and went across to catch his train a full half hour before it was announced to start. He walked up and down the platform rapidly, heedless of all the groups that stood upon it, deaf to the yells of frantic newsboys. What was the *Times* to Frank Noel, who had in his heart of hearts better news than could come from any known or unknown corner of this wandering star? The Russians might be in Constantinople, the French in Alderney, the Prussians in Heligoland, the Spaniards in Gibraltar: to him what matter, so that Elinor was at Delamere, waiting for him? He walked the platform in that visionary haste which causes your true lover to be as easily recognizable at a railway terminus as a runaway banker. Hurried travellers utter maledictions as he and they collide: he

rang it seemed to him a blast upon the drawbridge horn at Delamere.

He got into a carriage where there was one other traveller—a tall broad-chested fair-haired man, with a laughing reckless bronze face, wrapt up in a heavy cloak of lion-skins. The mighty mane of a lion fell over his shoulders. His appearance was so original that Frank was almost aroused from his happy dream. Quite aroused indeed, when, as they got up the incline into lighter air, the stranger said,—

“Do you smoke?”

He asked this simple question in a voice that sounded like song, so exquisite was its tenor. Frank, looking up to answer yes, saw that the voice issued from a mouth of perfect curve, and that the eyes were alight with fun and poetry. What colour they were he could no more tell than the colours of a wind-driven sunset-stained sea.

“Smoking,” said the stranger, so musically that Frank could not help listening, “is a bad habit. I admit this. (By the way, can I offer you a cigar?”—but Frank was already lighting one.) “Yet, as a sedative, we find it useful in these fast days. It has been objected that Adam did not smoke in Eden: but it is indisputable that the tobacco-plant grew there: and if so, what was it for? I am sure he would have been glad of a cigar when he was standing outside the gate, without a portmanteau or a *Bradshaw* or the least idea where to find an hotel.”

All the while he spoke he was lighting a huge chibouque, which now he puffed with energy. It was large enough to suit Adam himself, even though the father of our race were the giant the *Talmud* describes him.

“I have an uncle, a canon of the Church,” said Frank, “who would call your illustration blasphemous.”

“He would be right. I learnt it in America—at Boston, Massachusetts—where it is considered the highest order of wit. To be classical instead: don’t you think, if Achilles could have smoked a pipe after Briseis was taken away from him, Troy would have been taken in less time?”

“But we shouldn’t have had the *Iliad*,” rejoined Frank.

“I don’t like the *Iliad*; the *Odyssey*’s my book. Homer wrote the *Odyssey* for fun in his youth, and the *Iliad* in his old age to kudzize some stuck-up aristocratic families. The *Iliad* is a queer mixture; it was the *Bible* and the *Peerage* of the Greeks.”

Frank laughed at this whimsical notion. Silence ensued. They looked out on the country, where Spring began to move, as if expectant of the angel April, her white hands wet with flowers. Suddenly the musical voice arose again:

“Eden or Troy, you see, it doesn’t matter, a woman is always at

the bottom of all mischief. Now you are in love, of course: all fellows worth anything are in love at your age. *I was.* Damn it: the tremendous tomfoolery of that time would exhaust me now, but for tobacco. It sent me all round the world: I got the materials for this cloak somewhere in mid-Africa: it has made me a filibuster, a gold-digger, a conspirator, a geographical explorer; I can't keep quiet because I did a foolish thing when you were a baby. If you saw me in the streets of London I should be pelting along at six miles an hour, trying to get I don't know where."

"Is that where you're going now?" asked Frank.

"Pretty much so. I mean to sleep at Carlisle: for after all one *must* sleep, you know, though I can seldom manage more than four hours at a time. More people overeat than overdrink, and more people oversleep than either. It is the cause of half the world's stupidity. Do you know why the English is the greatest nation in the world? Because we are the only people whose Parliament is strong enough to sit at night?"

"A new idea," said Frank.

"Not at all. The Druids always counted time by nights, not days. Sunlight is God's wine: waste no drop of it: it is a sin to work when the sun shines. Night, with its calm stars and magic moon, is the time for thought and for work. Night for the poet and the orator: one touch of the glorious sun on green grass shames all their rhymes and periods. *Maryas*, depend on it, was a bad poet who persisted in writing by day, and got a sunstroke: I learnt that at Athens, from Tricoupi, who wrote the history."

"And where do you go to-morrow?" asked Frank Noel.

"Ah, that's what I don't know: where do you go?"

"I do not stay at Carlisle. I am going to drive to a place some miles off—Delamere, Lord Delamere's place."

"A very fine house, I have heard," said the musician in a low voice.

"Unique, I should think. An immense hexagonal hall with galleries, and room for billiard-tables, dining-tables, writing-tables, and a dozen dogs, still leaving central space for a country dance. All round, on three floors, superb suites of rooms. It is a house for a prince, and the Earl is princely."

"An old man, I believe?"

"Over seventy. White-haired and rather infirm, having been ill lately. He lives almost entirely in his own rooms."

"You will find it dull. But perhaps he has a wife and family. Daughters, eh, or granddaughters more likely, would be your attraction."

"He is a bachelor," said Frank, "so far as I know. There are some ladies visiting there, I believe: and there is a man whom most people seem to know, so perhaps you know him—Mr. Carington."

"Carington!" intoned the musical voice rather peculiarly. "Yes, I think I used to know him, years ago. Does he ride still?"

"O yes. Every day, when he can."

"Ah, he's as tough as steel, and as keen. He is the only man I ever envied. Things make him wise that would make other men mad."

"I like to hear you or any man speak well of him, for he has been my best friend from my birth. Indeed he was my godfather."

The stranger eyed Frank rather curiously, and was about to speak, but did not. There was an interval of smoke. There was a longer interval of sleep.

It was dark enough when they reached Carlisle—a chill March evening, with mist in the air and hoar frost on the land. The station looked pleasant to the travellers, as they got into the blaze of its lamps. Frank, inquisitive as to his companion, noted him as he shook himself and stretched in his lionskins. A gaunt retainer in shooting-jacket and gaiters came up to him, just as Lord Delamere's footman had discovered Frank.

"Luggage to the County Hotel, Wolf. Dinner or supper, whichever they like to call it: plenty, mind, for I'm as hungry as if I'd lived on bread and butter for a year. That fellow," he continued to Frank, "has been all over the world with me. But good-night; I am keeping you, and you have a long drive."

And he strode off to the hotel at a tremendous pace, leaving Frank in annoyance at his own dulness in not having tried to obtain his fellow-traveller's name, or getting him to send a message to Mr. Carington.

"I am always so slow," thought Frank. "Anybody else would have done the right thing at the right time. I think of it afterwards."

When he was comfortably inside the Earl's omnibus, his thoughts returned to Elinor, shortening the way so much that he was astonished when the sound of the horn prepared him for rumbling over the drawbridge. It was pleasant to enter the great Hall again, full of life and warmth: pleasant to see the white-haired Earl leaning on his staff by the fire, ready to greet him: pleasant to receive a hearty grip from Carington's friendly hand. Well, and perhaps it was even more pleasant to look at Elinor's happy eyes and laughing lips and blushing face, and to find a meaning in the pressure of her warm white hand. Humorously pleasant also an introduction to the Marchesa: the tiny white lady stood with an immense mastiff on each side of her . . . for the Earl was so amused by her belief in Tasso as a defender, that he ordered two of his finest dogs, Emperor and Empress, brother and sister, to

—"Guard that lady!"

They would not leave her afterwards till their master dismissed them : she looked like a remarkably small Una between two lions.

"Let us have supper at once," said the Earl. "Our traveller must be hungry. I am glad to hear the Canon is so much better."

"He is almost well," said Frank.

Supper was served. Rachette, culinary patrician, had excelled himself. He had invented a *Surprise à la Retour de l'Oiseau* which would have delighted Cambacères. They were a merry party . . . Raffaella perhaps the merriest. There she sat, between the two mighty mastiffs, a snowy mischievous fairy, and pecked at Rachette's delicacies, and sipped the froth of the wine.

"We are all glad to see you, Frank," said Mr. Carington. "I can assure you that you were missed."

"By my lord, of course," says the Marchesa.

"Certainly by me," said the Earl. "No one could have missed you so much."

"O!" cried Raffaella. "Please don't. I have been dressing a doll on purpose for him."

Frank looked at Elinor, who certainly had about her a charm unusual of flower-fretted hair and dainty lace and gracious blend of colour.

"You are a wicked witch," said Mr. Carington.

"Now listen," she said : "this is an old song, old as the world. You know I am no improvisatrice." She sang :—

"Says his father, 'I have missed you,
Missed you, missed you.'

'Why, sir, why?'

'Why, when I had the vapours

You used to read the papers :

Son, that's why.'

"Says his mother, 'I have missed you,
Missed you, missed you,'

'Why, ma'am, why?'

'Because you used to slaughter

The fowls, and fetch the water :

Son, that's why.'

There are a great number of verses, running through all the members of his family, even to his grandmother's cousin : it would take all night ; but may I sing you one more ?

"O, yes, go on," said the Earl.

The Marchesa sang :—

"Said a maiden, 'I have missed you,
Missed you, missed you.'

'Why, child, why?'

'Because, before I missed you,

I meant so to have kissed you,

And said, good-bye !'"

of his bed or out of his grave, you could do it. But I find I must go: Frank, my boy, you shall help me to my rooms, and then go back and have a pleasant night. You deserve it."

Frank came forward, and Lord Delamere gave him his arm. Never did he see Frank without thinking of Frank's father, and trying to make some amend.

"By the way, Marchesa," said the Earl, "do you want those dogs to sleep in your room?"

"O no, what a terrible thought!"

"They will, unless I send them to their kennels. Shall I? Won't you be frightened?"

"No, I am brave. I have had supper."

So the Earl went one way and Emperor and Empress the other, and then the other four sat down to enjoy "the sweet o' the night."

"Did you get rid of the Minx, Frank?" asked Mr. Carington.

"O yes, I wasn't going to leave my uncle in her clutches."

And then he told the story, which caused much laughter.

"She'd have married the dear old Canon by force," said Mr. Carington, "if you had left her behind."

"What a dreadful person!" exclaimed Raffaella. "Elinor, my dear, you do not talk to-night. I did not dress my doll to be silent. Come, talk or sing, or at least laugh."

"Who can help laughing when you are chattering, Raffaella?" said Mr. Carington. "But Elinor shall sing, for everybody adores her voice. I was turning over some old music here the other day, and saw a song that quite suits the moment. Will you try it Elinor?"

It was quite a walk to the corner where stood a grand piano, looking small.

"There should be a railway round this hall," said Raffaella.

Mr. Carington found the song, which Elinor sang:—

"They ride beneath the boughs at noon,
A lord and lady bright,
And laugh to hear the cuckoo's tune
And watch the swallow's flight,
And hearken to the skylark's lay
Hid in the sky's blue light. . . .
Ah, love has laughter for the day,
And silence for the night.

"The long long day of pleasure past,
The banquet richly dight—
The lady's eyelids droop at last
O'er eyes of chrysolite:



"There is another stanza," said Mr. Carington, "but it is slightly in Mat Prior's vein."

They returned to the supper-table, to take a farewell glass of wine. Suddenly Frank bethought him of his fellow-traveller, who had vanished from his memory while in Elinor's presence. He mentioned his adventure, and such of the conversation as he could recall.

"I never saw such a remarkable man, in his way. He seems to have been all over the world. Was curious about this place, and seemed to have known you well, Mr. Carington, years ago. Asked if you were still fond of riding."

Mr. Carington was puzzled. He remembered a stalwart figure he had seen shouldering his way through Brook-street one day in town, whose appearance sent a thrill through him. But the Marchesa interposed.

"Stay, Mr. Frank. Tall, broad, eyes of all colours, blue like the sea, brown, gray, I know not what, hair like floss silk, a mixture of dark gray and amber, and a voice like the Angelus bell . . . all that, wrapt in lions' skins."

"Your picture is perfect."

"Ah, then it is Leo, it is Leo!—my Leo!"

"Your Leo?" says Mr. Carington, almost sternly.

"Well no, not my Leo. But I always used to meet him, everywhere in Europe: only he said he would never come to England, never. But it must be Leo. He is such a grand conspirator: and O, how he hates Number One! O Mr. Carington, you must take me to Carlisle to find Leo."

(To be continued.)

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THE OWL'S NEST IN THE CITY.

CHAPTER IX.

"Hoping it was but an effect of humour,
Which sometime hath his hour with every man."

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN we reached X Court, St. John did not come in with us as usual ; he excused himself, saying that the horses were so hot he was afraid to leave them standing in the night air ; but I believe the real truth of the matter was that he felt discomposed, without knowing the reason why. On going upstairs we were surprised to find Mr. Earle waiting for us in the sitting-room, and there was a disagreeable look of satisfaction on his face which I could not help fancying boded evil to some one of us. I thought Miss Paton felt this also, for she looked to me pale and uneasy. There were some refreshments on the table, but no one seemed disposed to take any, and a general sense of restraint appeared to hang over us all. After a few moments Miss Paton rose to retire, and Mr. Earle then said : " May I have the pleasure of a few words with you before you go to bed ? "

Miss Paton sat down again, but it was evident that she trembled. Dick and I rose, in order to leave them alone together ; but, before saying good night, Dick poured out a glass of wine and handed it to Miss Paton, who drank it hastily, as if she thought she should require its help to keep up her spirits.

Our bed-room was on the upper story, and we went upstairs together. Without any previous concert, however, but acting under the same impulse, we both paused on the first landing ; and after listening for a few moments, hoping to judge the nature of the interview from the sound of Mr. Earle's tone of voice, and finding we could hear nothing, we seated ourselves on the stairs to wait for the chance of seeing or speaking to Miss Paton again, after he had left her.

One weary hour passed by, and still we sat in silence. At last Dick said, " I don't know what has come to me, Ned : I always used

to laugh at you for thinking ill of my uncle, and for being fanciful and nervous, and yet to-night I feel a sort of foreboding of evil."

"So do I, Dick. I don't believe Mr. Earle ever meddles in anything for good."

Dick sighed. "I ought not to think so," he said, sadly; "you know he got me my commission."

Then followed another long silence, and St. Paul's was chronicling the loss of another hour, when Mr. Earle at last opened the sitting-room door and went to his own room.

"Now we shall see her face as she crosses the hall," said Dick, softly rising, and leaning over the bannisters.

After another quarter of an hour spent in this expectation, I whispered to Dick, "Let us go down and see; if she is unhappy, I think you can comfort her."

We stole downstairs as cautiously as if we had been committing a sin, and softly opening the sitting-room door, saw Miss Paton still seated at the table, but with her face bowed down upon her hands, and evidently weeping bitterly.

Poor Dick lost all self-command at the sight. In an instant he was on his knees at her feet, and gently taking her hands, he said, "For God's sake, do not cry so! Tell us, only tell us, what is the matter, and what we can do for you."

Miss Paton, though unable to suppress her sobs, let her head sink upon his shoulder, while he, regardless, I think forgetful, of my presence, wiped away her tears, calling her by every tender and endearing name, with the accent and manner of a mother caressing a weeping child. I cannot say I did not suffer at the sight; but there was a depth of love and tenderness in his tone, so far beyond and above the species of emotion excited in my own breast, that I felt ashamed of the ignoble jealousy I could not quite overcome. I determined to leave them together, and go to my own room; but the thought of Mr. Earle's sneer, should he by any chance return and find them thus alone, prevented me. I closed the door softly, and decided to keep watch outside.

It was very long before they came out; and as my lameness rendered standing for any length of time painful to me, I had no resource but to seat myself upon the ground. I reasoned with myself as well as I could, for I knew well enough that I had no right to call my own sensations love, if I compared them with the unbounded devotion I recognized in Dick; and I must have effectually succeeded in subduing my unworthy jealousy, for I soon fell fast asleep.

I was awakened at last by Dick's opening the door. His face was radiant with happiness, and the only trace I could see of Miss Paton's tears was that her bright eyes appeared more brilliant than ever. She seemed annoyed at seeing me there, and hurried into her own room without speaking.

but I was so glad to see him look so happy, that I forgot to be weary almost as completely as I had forgotten to be jealous. Another man might perhaps have suspected me of eaves-dropping, but Dick never suspected wrong or evil in anyone, and perhaps it was for that reason that it crushed him so utterly when it came upon him.

We stole upstairs as quietly as possible, and it was not until our bed-room door was shut that I ventured to speak, and say—

“You need not tell me what has happened, Dick; I know it all by your face.”

He threw his arms round my neck and kissed me in his joy, as he had so often done in his sorrow, when a child.

He then briefly related to me the substance of Mr. Earle's communication to Miss Paton. He had handed her a letter to read, which he said he had received from her mother's husband in India, in which the writer absolutely refused to acknowledge Miss Paton as his child, and forbade Mr. Earle ever to write to him on the subject again. Mr. Earle had recommended her to return to Dijon, and offered to pay the expenses of her journey. She having answered that she had rather die than go back, he had coldly suggested that she should endeavour to obtain a situation as governess. He had, however, added that he feared it would be very difficult to obtain one, as she had no one to refer to but himself; and he could not even promise to recommend her unless she moved into lodgings, as it was impossible he could countenance the extreme impropriety of her manner of life at X Court.

Miss Paton had asked him why he had never objected to it before; to which he had sneeringly replied that it was not his place to teach female delicacy to a young lady who was not confided to his charge; and that he spoke of it now because, if she required him to act as her referee, she must certainly adopt a very different line of conduct. On this understanding he had agreed to allow her to remain a week at X Court while he sought to find her a situation. So saying he had left her alone, humiliated by reproofs she dared not resent, and almost crushed to the earth by the knowledge of her poverty and isolation.

Warmly as I congratulated Dick, and fully as I sympathized in the delight he felt in being able, through his affection, to rescue Miss Paton from her painful and precarious position, still I could have found it in my heart to wish that his offer had been made and accepted before she knew the extent of her misfortune. I did not like to think that Dick should be accepted from any mixed or inferior motives; and with the remembrance of her own account of her conduct towards her mother present to my mind, I had an uneasy doubt whether she was sufficiently disinterested to love him for himself alone. At any rate I wished that the worldly advantages of

the proposal, to one in Miss Paton's position, had not been so evident; but I could see that Dick had no misgivings, and he was too supremely happy to notice any want of enthusiasm in my manner.

We rose earlier than usual on the next morning, for Dick was anxious to speak to his uncle before Miss Paton came to breakfast.

As soon as Mr. Earle entered the sitting-room, therefore, Dick said, "I am sure, uncle, you will agree with me that there can be no impropriety in Miss Paton's remaining here, when I tell you she has consented to become my wife."

Mr. Earle started so violently that it was only by clutching hold of the table that he saved himself from falling. His face turned deadly pale, and he fixed his eyes on Dick with an indescribable look of mingled rage and terror. He made two attempts to speak without being able to articulate a syllable: at last he gasped out, "Your wife!—damn you, what do you mean? Are you mad or drunk?"

"You are, I believe," retorted Dick, indignantly.

"Hush, Dick, he is ill," said I, seeing Mr. Earle stagger as he went towards a chair, upon which he rather fell than seated himself.

"What in Heaven's name is the matter, uncle?" said Dick, somewhat more gently.

I could see that Earle made a violent struggle to recover himself; he even tried to laugh as he answered, "I believe I am not quite well this morning, and your nonsense startled me,—that's all."

"Nonsense?" said Dick, angrily; "I never spoke more in earnest."

"I tell you it is cursed fool's nonsense," said Earle, turning fiercely upon him; "the thing is utterly impossible. The girl shall leave the house this very day."

"She shall not," said Dick, quietly.

"Who is to prevent me from turning her out, pray?"

"I—I will turn you out first: this house is my father's, and——"

"Your *father's*, you damned bastard!" roared Earle; but the words had scarcely passed his lips before Dick had struck him to the ground, and I fear that in that moment of ungovernable passion he would have done him more deadly mischief, had not Miss Paton—who, attracted by the noise of their quarrel, had entered the room unnoticed by them both—sprung forward at great risk to herself, and seized his arm.

Dick's rage yielded to her touch; the fierce flush of passion died away from his cheek and left him very pale. Mr. Earle sprang to his feet, and rushed furiously towards Dick; then, mastering himself by a sudden effort, he ran out of the room, nearly overthrowing the housemaid and old Withers, who were standing trembling in the doorway, and scattering the morning's letters which the former held in her hand.

Leaving Dick to Miss Paton, who, I felt sure, would soothe and

calm him better than I could, I advanced to the servants, and trying to make as light of the scene as possible, I said—

“Go upstairs again; there has been a foolish quarrel, but it is all over now.”

“Quarrel! it’s a mercy it wasn’t murder,” whimpered the housemaid, as she turned away to go upstairs.

Old Withers waited till the girl was gone, and then drawing close to me she whispered, “It’s true enough, worse luck; and if Stephen Earle don’t hold his tongue, there will be murder here one of these days, as sure as fate.”

“Oh, no! it is all over, don’t be frightened; I will speak to Mr. Earle myself, and to Dick too,” I said, anxious to quiet the poor old woman, who was still shaking like a leaf; but my own mind was, in fact, too agitated and confused to allow me to decide whether it would be better to speak plainly to Earle on the subject, or to feign to regard the words he had used as the mere unmeaning utterance of passion.

Old Withers slowly took her way upstairs again, and I returned to the sitting-room without having made up my mind as to the best course to pursue.

I picked up the scattered letters as I entered, and noticed that one of them was addressed to Dick, and bore the postmark of the watering-place in Devonshire where James and my uncle were. The handwriting, however, was not known to me.

With a sudden presentiment of fresh sorrow, I took it at once to Dick, who was sitting silent on the sofa, holding Miss Paton’s hand in his, and begged him to read it directly.

He opened it hastily, glanced over its contents, and gave it back to me. I saw that he could not speak, and I knew by his face that the worst had happened. The letter was from the mistress of the lodgings my uncle had taken, and was as follows:—

“SIR,—It is my painful duty to inform you that young Mr. Prescott died this morning at seven o’clock. His death was quite easy, but entirely unexpected to his father, and indeed the poor young gentleman said last night that he felt greatly better.

“I shall be obliged if you will either come down yourself or send someone with authority to see after the funeral, for Mr. Prescott does not seem to be in his right mind since his son’s death, and he will not allow any of us to go near the corpse or take any steps for its removal.

“I am, Sir,

“Your obedient servant,

“E. DANVERS.”

The blow was so sudden that at first we sat silent and stunned;

her, Ned?"

I was very unwilling to stay: it is true poor James was not my brother, but I loved him dearly, and I longed to have one last look. Neither did I feel very eager just then to champion Miss Paton; so I said,—

"I will go and speak to Mr. Earle first, Dick. I do not believe he meant what he said; he was so carried away by passion, he did not know what he was doing; but, of course, I promise to stay with Miss Paton if necessary."

Taking with me Mrs. Danvers's letter, I went to Mr. Earle's room. I really to some extent believed what I said; that is, I felt convinced that he had never intended to keep the secret of the family disgrace so long, merely to publish it now. That epithet at least was wrung from him by passion, and I had an instinctive feeling that when he had time for reflection he would endeavour to eat his words.

Mr. Earle was walking up and down the room when I went in.

"A great misfortune has fallen upon Dick—upon all of us, sir," I said, putting the letter into his hands.

He appeared much shocked at its contents,—more so than I expected indeed. "Good God, what will become of poor Prescott?" he said; and turning from me, he walked to the window, evidently struggling with some strong emotion or agitation, yet it scarcely looked like grief.

"Dick and I both wished to go down to-night, sir, but——"

"But, after what has passed, you are afraid to leave Miss Paton alone, for fear I should turn her out of doors, is that it?"

"Seeing upon what an errand Dick has to go," I replied, "I think you will hardly refuse to let her stay quietly here, at least till we return."

"You are quite right, Ned," he replied. "I will come and speak to Dick. The fact is, I was wrong. I was not well this morning, and I forgot myself; but if Dick were not so devilish hot-tempered—however, I will make it all right."

I had succeeded even beyond my hopes, but I could not divest myself now of the idea that the change was too complete—that Mr. Earle was acting a part, in short; and therefore I said nothing, but followed him into the sitting-room, anxious to see the end. He walked straight up to Dick, who was leaning his head on his hands and looking very sad, and said, "Dick, my man, I was wrong. I got into a passion, and when one is in a passion one says all sorts of foolish things. You were a little rough in your anger, too, but I know you are not one to bear malice; the fact is—now I am cool—that Miss Paton shall be quite welcome to stay here, not only till your return, but as long as ever she likes."

tears in his eyes, he thanked him with an enthusiasm it went to my heart to see. I—who, thanks to old Withers, knew Earle too well to take it all in—was able to notice that he avoided looking Dick in the face as much as possible, and that his whole manner was unnatural and forced.

Satisfied that Miss Paton was secure, our thoughts now reverted to our mournful journey. I retired to my room to pack a few necessities, while Dick, seizing his hat, hurried in search of Colonel S —.

CHAPTER X.

“What a strange thing is man ! and what a stranger
Is woman ! What a whirlwind is her head,
And what a whirlpool full of depth and danger
To all the rest about her ! Whether wed
Or widow, maid or mother, she can change her
Mind like the wind : whatever she has said
Or done, is light to what she'll say or do.”—BYRON.

“And ever since then hath Richard been obscured,
Deprived of honour and inheritance.”—SHAKESPEARE.

As I left the dining-room I was surprised to see Miss Paton come out of her bed-room with her bonnet and shawl on. “Are you going out before Dick comes back ?” I said ; “will you not wait to bid him good-bye ?”

“I have already said good-bye to Cornet Prescott,” she answered, “and I have an appointment with Father Louis ; so now good-bye to you.”

She held out her hand with one of her sweetest smiles, but I could not feel quite in charity with her. Considering the affliction that had fallen upon Dick, I thought she might have stayed at home to cheer him at the last with some words of sympathy. “I wonder whether all Catholics are like that,” said I to myself. “If the priest is of more importance than the lover, I should think the husband would have a poor chance indeed. On the whole, I think I would rather marry a Protestant.”

What little packing I had to do was soon finished ; and as it was impossible to read, I sat down to wait for Dick. But the manifold emotions of the morning, and the terrible thought that poor, gentle, quiet James was gone from us for ever, and that I had never shown him the affection and consideration he deserved, rendered my reflections so painful that the solitude became intolerable to me, and I strolled out to meet Dick. I continued to walk on in a sort of

me, in whom, to my utter astonishment, I recognized Miss Paton and the handsome young man whose insolent mode of testifying his admiration had so annoyed me when I formerly accompanied her to chapel. She was leaning on his arm, and talking and laughing as gaily as if there were no such things as sorrow and death in the world. Her bonnet concealed her face from me, but I could see the expression with which her companion's eyes were bent upon her, and I felt angry and indignant for Dick's sake. At no time ought she to have flirted with that impudent stranger, but on that day of all others it appeared to me almost a crime.

I turned back, and retraced my steps to X Court with my mind in a state of great confusion. I began almost to dislike Miss Paton, to regret that Dick had bound himself to her, to long to put him on his guard against loving her too well ; then, ignorant and inexperienced as I was, a certain instinct warned me that to speak against the woman of his choice to a man heartily in love is to rivet his chain with the rivet strongest of all in noble natures—chivalry. I turned these things over and over in my own mind, until the remembrance of my dead cousin rose before me as if to reproach me for thinking of Miss Paton's follies or defects at such a time. I was thoroughly wearied out when I reached X Court, where Dick was ready waiting for me.

Scarcely a word passed between us during the journey, and when we approached T—— I forgot Miss Paton and her delinquencies in my anxiety to arrive in time to have one last look at my poor cousin.

The woman of the house seemed much relieved to see us, and she at once conducted us to the room where the corpse lay ; informing us that Mr. Prescott had angrily resisted all their attempts to perform the usual sad ceremonies, or place the body in its coffin.

When we went in, my uncle was sitting crouched down upon a low stool on the farther side of the bed. He raised his eyes as we entered, but gave no sign of recognition. He was so changed that I scarcely knew him ; unwashed, uncombed, unshorn, and with a vacancy in his gaze that suggested imbecility quite as much as despair.

We both paused at the sight, and spoke to him without receiving any answer. Mrs. Danvers whispered to Dick : " He'll neither speak nor move, sir, unless you go near the corpse."

Dick went up to the bed on the side opposite to that where Mr. Prescott sat, and was stooping over it to kiss his brother's forehead, when my uncle suddenly started up, and pushing him violently away with the air and gesture of a maniac, shrieked out,—

with his hands. My uncle continued to gesticulate and shake his fist at him with a look of idiotic rage and triumph.

"Uncle!" I said, going up to him and seizing him by the wrist with all the sternness I could muster, "how dare you to speak so to Dick! Remember," I added, pointing to the corpse, "remember how *he* loved him, and that perhaps he sees you even now."

"Loved him," whimpered my uncle in a childish heartbroken way; "why his very last words were not for me, I tell you; they were all of love for Dick."

Dick threw himself on his knees by the side of the bed at these words, and taking his brother's cold hand in both of his, kissed it over and over again in a passion of tears. My uncle looked on in gloomy silence, but made no further opposition. Perceiving that my words had had some effect, I said, "Yes, James loved him dearly, and remember that he, who is now in heaven, will love and pray for you as you deal justly with his beloved brother."

My uncle was now crying like a child, and I took advantage of this unexpected return of softness to lead him from the room. Finding I had acquired an influence over him, I desired him to take some bread and wine which Mrs. Danvers brought in, whispering to me that he had touched nothing since his son's death. After he had drunk a little wine and eaten ravenously of the bread, exhausted nature asserted her rights, and laying his head upon the table he fell into a deep sleep.

Mrs. Danvers seized the opportunity to send her husband and son to put the body into the coffin, which was already in the house, and afterwards took my directions for the funeral.

My uncle did not wake for several hours, and he was then quiet and resigned, and obeyed any suggestion I made with docility. Having learned from Mrs. Danvers that Dick had gone out, I thought it well to go myself with my uncle to the chamber of death, as I feared he might go into a rage at the sight of the coffin. He said nothing, however, though the tears again ran down his cheeks.

"Let him cry, sir," said Mrs. Danvers to me; "if anything can restore him to his right mind, crying will."

I followed her advice, and allowed his tears to have free course for a time; then again assuming an air of authority, I desired him to go to bed; and, to my surprise and satisfaction, he quietly obeyed.

I was eager to join Dick, and, as soon as I felt convinced my uncle was quiet for the night, I hastened down to the sea-shore to look for him. The moon was setting fast, but her last beams enabled me to distinguish a tall figure slowly pacing up and down on a solitary part of the sands. I joined him unseen, and put my hand on his shoulder.

"Dick dear, you must not attach any importance to what—"

"Hush, Ned," he answered, with a look under which all my hopes of further deception vanished, "it is too late to say what you were going to say. If you know nothing more than I do, do not speak of it at all; if you know the truth, tell it me. The time for lies is over: *he* did not lie, standing beside the dead."

I saw that I must indeed speak the truth myself, or leave him to seek it from those who would tell it less gently; so I answered—

"I do know the truth, Dick; I am ready to tell you all now: if I have kept it back from you, it has been only through love. No wrong done to you by others could make you less dear or noble to me."

He wrung my hand affectionately in reply, and then said, in a low voice, "Tell me all."

And then, while we sadly paced the sea-shore, I told him the story as Withers had told it to me, with a painful remembrance of my boyish folly in having once before related a melodramatic version of the sad history to him, with embellishments of my own. I wondered whether he too recollected it. He heard me in silence; the only outward sign of emotion he gave was an occasional thrill or shiver—it seemed to me of suppressed rage—when I spoke of Mr. Earle.

When I had concluded, we continued to walk up and down in silence for some time; at last he said: "Thank you, Ned, for being honest with me: let us go in now, we will talk to-morrow."

When we returned to the house, Dick, taking his candle from Mrs. Danvers's hands without speaking, went at once to his own room.

"Young Mr. Prescott looks dreadful bad, sir," said Mrs. Danvers, in a sympathizing voice; "do you think there is anything he could take?" There is a large class of well-meaning persons in this world whose first idea, when they see a fellow-creature stricken by a grievous sorrow, is, "what can he take?"

Mrs. Danvers, however, had, I knew, heard my uncle's words, and I fancied that by thus assuming that Dick was the one most to be consoled with, she hoped to draw me into conversation upon what had passed. I therefore answered, "Oh no, I know his way; there is nothing for it but to leave him alone."

Mrs. Danvers shook her head with the air of one far from satisfied, but said no more.

During the two dreary days that intervened before the funeral took place, I scarcely ever saw Dick. He generally went out early and wandered about the country during the greater part of the day; and even when he came back, he rarely spoke. Meanwhile my influence over my uncle hourly increased, and I found that by assuming, when necessary, a tone of severity, I could rule him as completely as if he

port in my society, though he never spoke. He took not the slightest notice of Dick when he saw him, so that we were at least spared the pain of witnessing any further manifestations of fury or aversion.

We had decided to return to London on the evening of the day fixed for the funeral ; but my uncle was seized with an epileptic fit as he stood by the side of the grave, and the prostration of strength that followed was so excessive, that we were obliged to carry him back to our lodgings, and give up all thoughts of travelling for the present.

I urged Dick to return ; but he was unwilling to leave me alone with the patient, as my physical weakness and infirmity rendered me very unfit to play the part of nurse. He therefore wrote to Colonel S—, explaining the circumstances, and requesting further leave of absence.

"I shall write to Mary, too, Ned," he said. "I cannot feel that our engagement is binding upon her until she knows who and what she has accepted."

"O, my dear Dick, I hope you will do no such thing," I said, eagerly. "You are in no way obliged to tell her the truth. Whether from early education or from her unfortunate position, she is evidently a little worldly, and——"

- Dick looked at me in indignant amazement, "Worldly !" he repeated.

"At any rate," I added, "there is every reason to believe that her position is the same as your own : we know for certain that her supposed father has refused to acknowledge her as his child."

"I am certain you misjudge her character," answered Dick ; "and as to her unhappy position, that appears to me a reason why she should meet with a protector absolutely *sans reproche*." Then seeing I was again about to protest, he added, "She has told us the truth as to her position, and it is but just she should know the truth as to mine. If she were worldly, as you think, it would be a still stronger reason for letting her know that I have not a penny in the world except my pay."

I saw that words were useless, yet I would have given anything to persuade Dick not to write. I doubted Miss Paton's disinterestedness, and I dreaded any new sorrow for Dick just at this time. In my heart, however, I felt he was right, and I said no more.

"I will write to Mr. Earle, Dick ; it is necessary he should be informed of my uncle's state. The doctor told me this morning that he would regain his bodily health, but that there was no probability that he would ever recover his intellect. As to the rest, there is no occasion for anyone but ourselves and Miss Paton to know anything.

never touch a farthing of Mr. Prescott's money, and I intend to save and screw, until I can pay back the price he paid for my commission. My uniform will burn my shoulders until I have done so. Therefore if Mary accept me, she will have to accept a poor man. The *name* I must keep, for my mother's sake," he added, in a low voice ; " though God knows she would have shown more mother's love if she had strangled me at my birth."

Our two letters were written and despatched the same evening, but six days elapsed without the arrival of any reply for either of us. My uncle gradually recovered his strength, but, as the doctor foretold, he remained perfectly imbecile in mind. He was extremely gentle, compliant, and easy to manage, but he very seldom spoke ; when he did, it was generally to make some childish or futile remark, to which he rarely seemed to require any answer. As soon as he was able to walk about again, Dick and I determined to return to London.

We were to travel at night, and on the morning of the day fixed for our departure, Dick, as usual, went early to the post-office to ask for letters.

I saw by his face, when he returned, that he had found none for himself. He, however, brought one crumpled, dirty-looking letter with him, directed to me ; but the handwriting of the superscription was unknown to both of us.

" What a strange scrawl ! " said I ; " it is a wonder it ever reached me. Who can it be from ? "

Dick leaned over my shoulder while I opened it ; the inside was more dirty and more illegible than the outside, and turning to the signature for an explanation of the mystery we saw, to our amazement, that the writer was Mrs. Withers.

With the utmost difficulty, for there were no stops to render the confusion less confounded, we deciphered the old woman's hieroglyphics, and read as follows :—

" Mr. Ned please come back at once and please to break it like to Mr. Dick for the young lady has run away and Miss McGregor is here from Scotland which Stephen Earle could not brazen it out to her and she with the proofs in her pocket so has taken himself off for fear of Dick and we quite alone not being willing to speak to the clerks only Mr. St. John at night thank God but fears she has not gone for any good though please to make the best of it and Miss McGregor says she will put it all into your hands Mr. Ned and never see nor speak to her and I am—

" Yours respectfully

" BETTY WITHERS."

whelming to both of us.

On re-reading the letter, Dick was furious with Mrs. Withers for saying Miss Paton had gone for no good ; and then, for the first time in his life, angry with me, because I could not evince the same unbounded confidence in her that he expressed.

He insisted upon it, that, in spite of his promises, Mr. Earle had attempted to coerce, threaten, or, perhaps, even insult her, and that she had fled from his violence.

"Good God, Ned ! how can you be so unjust as to doubt it ?" he said, snatching up Mrs. Withers's letter ; "don't you see she says he is afraid of me ? Is not that a proof that he has done her some wrong ? What should he have to 'brazen out,' if he had done her no wrong ?"

"True, Dick, true," I said, "of course you must be right."

I could not bear to add to his distress, but for the life of me I could not think what I said. His reasons were plausible ; but something within me whispered that he was mistaken. "Why," I asked myself, "does Miss McGregor declare she will neither see nor speak to her ? Why is she so against her, if there is nothing wrong ?"

The more I pondered on the subject, however, the more clearly I saw the folly of attempting to form any judgment upon so confused and incoherent a document as old Withers's letter, and that there was nothing to be done but to strive to wait with patience until we could speak with Miss McGregor and St. John. But then, St. John ! How, in the name of Heaven, was St. John mixed up in the matter ? At anyrate, I never doubted he was there for some kind purpose, and I felt that, whatever might be the new sorrow in store for Dick, St. John's simple straightforwardness and gentlemanly feeling would render him more valuable at such a time than the most superior talents could have done.

My uncle made no opposition to returning home ; indeed, I had no difficulty in inducing him to do anything I wished. A few moments after we had taken our seats in the coach, for the railway did not extend so far as T—— then, and more than one-third of the journey was performed by the coach,—he asked me where we were going.

"We are going home now, uncle, to X Court, you know."

"Yes, yes, to X Court," he answered ; and then added, with an imbecile gravity very painful to see, "it is my intention to take my son James into partnership when I return : he is a most superior young man, and will be a great acquisition to the firm."

I could not answer him ; but he did not appear to want an answer ; he continued rubbing his hands, and smiling softly to himself for a time, and at last, to my great relief, fell asleep.

Even at this distance of time, whenever I think of that weary journey, Dick's white face, compressed lips, and air of forced and

desperate patience, rise before me. There was an expression in his eyes, too, as he sat with knitted brows looking out into the darkness, which I had never seen in them before; and as I looked at him, I could not help feeling that if, indeed, Mr. Earle had done Miss Paton any wrong, it was well for us all that he had, as old Withers phrased it, taken himself off.

CHAPTER XI.

"The truth you speak doth lack some gentleness
And time to speak it in; you rub the sore,
When you should bring the plaister."—SHAKESPEARE.

As we rolled under the dark archway of X Court I remembered the sinking of heart that came over me on the day when I first entered its gloomy precincts in company with Mr. Slack, and I was wondering what new trials awaited us in an abode where indeed I had known little else, when a gleam of comfort shone upon me in the form of St. John's cordial face at the cab door. Even Dick's gloomy brow lighted up for a moment at the sight of him.

While Dick was paying the cabman, St. John whispered to me, "Take Prescott upstairs and let him see Miss McGregor at once, while I keep Dick talking outside: he might say something awkward just at first, you know."

I inferred from this that St. John already knew Dick's history, but fancied that Dick himself was still in ignorance of the truth; there was, however, no time to enter into any explanation just then, so I thought it best to follow his advice, and I at once took my uncle into the sitting-room, leaving St. John and Dick in the hall.

I knew nothing of old maids except the absurd, traditional old maid handed down to us by novel-writers; and naturally enough I had pictured Miss McGregor to myself as a typical representative of that class. Of course she would be everything that was cat-like, angular, and disagreeable.

I was much surprised to see a decidedly handsome, elegant old lady, dressed with no foolish attempt at juvenility, but as became her age, with her grey hair braided under a lace cap, while the sweeping folds of her ample velvet dress gave a certain almost imposing character to her appearance. She rose on our entrance, and, bowing gravely to me, held out her hand kindly to my uncle, who stood transfixed in the centre of the room, gazing upon her with an expression of great astonishment.

"I am afraid you do not remember me, Mr. Prescott," she said: "my name is McGregor; we met in Scotland, more than three-and-twenty years ago."

"Yes, yes, in Scotland, of course in Scotland," answered my

the benefit of his health ; when he returns he will be glad to make you welcome."

Having said this he seated himself by the fire, and, stretching out his hands to the blaze, relapsed into his usual state of placid indifference to all that passed around him.

Old Withers now brought in some breakfast, and I motioned to her to place some tea and cold meat by my uncle's side. I then desired him to eat and drink, and while he absently obeyed my directions, I said to Miss McGregor, "It will be useless to attempt to make my uncle understand you ; he takes no interest in anything now, and is always as you see him."

"Well, to be sure it's a queer world," said old Withers, who had been standing watching my uncle, and slowly shaking her head. "No one can't say but what Stephen Earle was twice as bad as that poor creature there ; and yet to see him struck down like that, while t'other gets off scot free ;—that don't seem like justice, anyhow."

"It is not for us to question the ways of Providence, Betty Withers," said Miss McGregor, much discomposed at the old woman's impiety.

"It ain't no use to question nothing, as far as I see, worse luck," retorted the old woman, doggedly ; and then, after once again shaking her head in the direction of my uncle, she left the room.

"You are Mr. Lovel, I presume?" said Miss McGregor, addressing me.

I bowed.

"Your letter to Mr. Earle had somewhat prepared me as to Mr. Prescott's state," she continued ; "but it is far worse than I supposed. I see, therefore, that what I have to say, I must say to you."

"To my cousin Dick, if you please, madam. I will fetch him immediately."

I was going towards the door, but Miss McGregor stopped me.

"To you, if you please, sir :—from what I have heard of the ungovernable violence of that young man, I——"

"Dick is the gentlest creature living !" exclaimed I, indignantly. "I dare say it may have suited Mr. Earle to say otherwise, but it is perfectly false ; besides, his position towards Miss Paton gives him a greater right than I."

I was again moving towards the door, when Miss McGregor, earnestly laying her hand upon my arm, said : "For God's sake, hear me out : his position towards her is very different from what you think." Then, lowering her voice to a whisper, she added—

"The misguided young lady whom you have known as Miss Paton, is his sister—Mr. Prescott's legitimate child !"

my mind was too full of mingled horror and sorrow on Dick's account ; but gradually the extent of Mr. Earle's villany overwhelmed every other idea, and my brain reeled at the thought of what might have been the consequences of his wickedness.

At length, with some remorse at the recollection of my own doubts as to Miss Paton's conduct, I said to Miss McGregor : " This then is the cause of the poor girl's absence ? She was quite right to go away just at first ; poor Dick ! "

" Miss Prescott knows nothing as yet of her relationship to our family," replied Miss McGregor, gravely ; " she was already gone when I arrived ; and from what Mrs. Withers here tells me," she added, turning to the old woman, who just then entered the room with some cold meat, " there is too much reason to fear she did not go alone."

" Good God, Withers ! is that true ? "

" True enough, sir, worse luck ; our errand-boy carried her luggage, and he says she was met at the station by a mighty fine young gentleman.

I remembered the impertinent young stranger at the Catholic chapel, and my heart sank within me.

At this moment St. John came in, looking much disturbed. " It is no use, madam," he said, addressing Miss McGregor apologetically ; " he has got it all out of me."

" So now there will be more mischief, I suppose," said old Withers.

" Really, Captain St. John, this is most indiscreet," said Miss McGregor ; " you promised me you would not tell him the worst just at first."

" Well, I know I did," said St. John, pettishly ; " but what is the use of trying to keep a thing back from a fellow who appeals to your honour and all that ? and then nothing would do but he must leave the house, so that I might run at once and bring her back. How could I help letting out that I did not know where she was ? and after that—you know, Ned, how quick he is—of course he saw that I had not told him all ; and how can you go on telling lies to a fellow that almost makes you cry ; damn it, I say it can't be done."

And poor St. John abruptly turned his back to hide the tears that were running down his cheeks, in apt illustration of Dick's having almost made him cry.

" Indeed, madam," I said, addressing Miss McGregor, " it is not to be expected Dick should rest quiet till he has found her, and, if possible, saved her from the consequences of her own folly. It is not in his nature to rest quiet when he sees anyone wronged, and he is sure to persuade himself that she has been deceived and wronged in this matter."

but only by her looks; and of that she knows nothing. After going away proves she is as lost to all female dignity as——"

"Hush!" interrupted old Withers, "here's Dick."

Miss McGregor started, and looked towards the door with an expression of both fear and dislike. It was evident that Mr. Earle's report of Dick's violence, combined with her own prejudice against him on account of his birth, caused her to expect something quite different from the reality, and a remarkable change passed over her face when he came in.

Dick had—as I have said—acquired an unusual gentleness of bearing, through a long habit of protection and tenderness towards me, and even his excessive paleness at this moment—the result, no doubt, of deep suffering and the instinctive effort all Englishmen make to suppress the outward show of emotion—gave a degree of dignity to his appearance which contrasted forcibly with the attitude of the high-born St. John, who, seated on the arm of the old black sofa, had fallen back upon his old resource of sucking his stick, while his legs were dangling in a far from imposing manner.

"How can I thank you, dear madam?" said Dick to Miss McGregor. "St. John has told me how nobly you have befriended my sister for my poor mother's sake."

Miss McGregor blushed deeply, and her blush was so becoming that I thought she looked ten years younger. "I wish you had better reason to be thankful to me," she replied; "but until I came here with your mother's last will in my possession I knew nothing of any previous will in your uncle's favour, and I was therefore quite unprepared for his opposition, and for the fury he displayed when he saw that I was determined to execute the charge imposed upon me. Moreover, the providential arrival of Captain St. John saved me from all personal risk."

"Oh, it's very well to make light of it now," said St. John, jumping off the sofa; "I am sure there are very few ladies would have shown such pluck. Earle was like a madman broken loose."

"We must not forget that in the first instance it was *he* who was wronged. He was the eldest, the only son, and he had every right to consider the property his own; indeed, it was only through some flaw in the entail that the squire was able to sell it, and even after it came into the family again, old Squire Earle promised to leave it to him, and broke his word. I do not justify Mr. Earle, but these facts are at least some excuse for his conduct. In his defence, written for me, he declares that he had been driven by the falsehood and injustice of others, to regain by stratagem what he, as the eldest son, believed to be rightfully his own."

"Stratagem!" said Dick; "the ruin of his sister's innocent child!"

"That's a very comfortable doctrine for elder sons," said St. John ; "but I'm only a younger son, and I don't seem to see it."

"But you have not told us, madam, how it was that you had it in your power to defeat him," said I.

"To make that clear I must go back to what happened a long while ago, and I feel uneasy at speaking of those times in *his* presence," she answered, glancing at Mr. Prescott, whose eyes were again fixed upon her with an expression of painful bewilderment that suggested the idea that he was trying to recall where and when he had seen her before.

"Uncle," said I, going up to him, "you had better go into your own room, now. You have your pipe there, you know, and all your books and papers."

"Yes, yes," he answered, rising, "we must never neglect business, Ned : it is my intention to take my son James into partnership as soon as he returns," he added, smiling serenely upon us ; "he is a most superior young man, and will be a great acquisition to the firm."

Miss McGregor tried hard to smile upon him in return, but it was evident that she shuddered.

I established my uncle in his easy chair by the side of the fire in his own room, lighted his pipe for him, and after waiting a few minutes, to see that he was quite quiet and contented, I returned to the sitting room. Miss McGregor had in the meantime sent Mrs. Withers upstairs for some fresh tea, and by gentle force she compelled Dick to take some breakfast, while St. John attacked the cold meat with a will.

Miss McGregor stood by the fireplace looking at Dick for some time, and then said to me in a low voice, "He is certainly very different from the savage Mr. Earle described. I am quite surprised at his appearance and manners. I assure you I consider him a most prepossessing young man."

"Of course you do," said I ; "everybody loves Dick."

When breakfast was over, Miss McGregor explained what little still remained obscure in the sad story of which we already knew the main facts.

It appeared that a short time before Mrs. Prescott forsook her home for the second time, she had written a letter to Miss McGregor telling her that her misery was so great she had no resource but suicide or flight, and imploring her to receive and protect her.

Miss McGregor, belonging, as she undoubtedly did, to that class of strictly conscientious, unbending women,—unfortunately too numerous—who contrive to render the grander virtues odious by the lack of the smaller and softer ones, wrote a letter of *hard* religion in reply, —reminding Mrs. Prescott that her present unhappiness was probably sent in mercy, in order to enable her to expiate the error of her girlhood ; telling her that she could never countenance a mother in for-

saking her duty to her children, and utterly refusing to receive her into her house.

Certain crises of wretchedness sometimes occur in our human life, during which to preach duty is a species of blasphemy against the holy idea itself. It is like seizing the moment when the ignorant savage crouches before some convulsion of nature, which he attributes to the anger of his Fetish, to speak to him of a God of peace and love. Had Miss McGregor only been one of those simple, unreasoning "good souls" who instinctively open their dear motherly arms to the wretched,—who can say but that her unquestioning pity might have wakened some untouched chord of tenderness in Mrs. Prescott's heart, and thus gradually and unconsciously recalled her to duty through love?

I am afraid many of us reason, when it would be truer wisdom to feel.

From the time when she was brought back after her first flight from her husband, Mrs. Prescott had been kept a close prisoner in her own house. The Grange was let, and Mr. Prescott, who received the rent, was very careful no longer to trust her with any money. In her desperation she applied to her brother Stephen to save her, declaring herself ready to make any sacrifice in order to live unmolested by her husband for the remainder of her life. Stephen, speculating upon her despair, had profited by her utter ignorance of the world, to persuade her that the only effectual means of escape from her husband's pursuit, would be to pass for dead. Upon this condition he agreed to arrange her flight; having first induced her to execute a will in his favour, in order, as he said, to enable him to receive the rents of her property and forward it to her for her support.

This document once in his possession, Stephen had encouraged her morbid leaning towards Catholicism, and placed her in the care of a Catholic priest, who had instructions to find her a safe asylum in Italy, and, after a few months, to forward a letter to Mr. Prescott announcing his wife's death. No doubt the priest was well paid for his trouble, for the documents forwarded to Mr. Prescott had every appearance of authenticity, and the deception was completely successful.

Mrs. Prescott shortly afterwards gave birth to a daughter, whom in the fervour of newly converted zeal, she determined to consecrate as the spouse of Christ. By the advice of her confessor—a Frenchman—she then left Italy and retired to the *Convent des Augustines* at Dijon, where she intended her daughter to take the veil.

However, the energy of her daughter's determination to the contrary, triumphed over her own weak and vacillating nature, and aware that she had not long to live, Mrs. Prescott wrote to her husband, imploring his forgiveness for the deception she had prac-

she had decided to send to England.

This was the mysterious letter with the black seal which I had seen Mr. Earle intercept. He answered it immediately, declaring that he wrote by his brother-in-law's desire, saying that Mr. Prescott absolutely refused to acknowledge his wife's daughter as his child, forbade her to send her to England, and solemnly declared that he would never forgive her.

Mrs. Prescott, though at first almost crushed by this reply, yet clung to the hope that if her husband could only see his daughter, his heart would be softened by her beauty and grace. She therefore persisted in her determination to send her to England. Much delay was caused by Mary Prescott's refusal to return to Dijon, and Mrs. Prescott's confessor—the Père Joseph, of whom her daughter had spoken so lightly, but who appears to have been an honest, sensible man—perceiving that her health was failing fast, advised her to execute a will leaving her property to her daughter, in order to secure her an independent and honourable existence, should Mr. Prescott persist in his refusal to acknowledge her. More worldly wise than his *penitente*, he recommended that this will should be entrusted to the care of some person in no way interested in the disposal of Mrs. Prescott's property, and Mrs. Prescott had sent it with a long explanatory letter to Miss McGregor, rightly judging that that lady would regard the execution of her dying request as a sacred duty. Miss Paton (I should say Mary Prescott) had told us that her mother died without confiding to her the name of the lady to whom she had entrusted her will.

Miss McGregor waited a few months without taking any step in the matter, as Mrs. Prescott had written that she should instruct her daughter to communicate with her as soon as she arrived in England. She at last wrote to the Lady-Superior of the *Convent des Augustines* to inquire what had become of Miss Prescott. The Superior, who had known both mother and daughter under the name of Paton, replied that no such person had ever been at the *Convent des Augustines*, nor was it until two months afterwards that she accidentally mentioned the circumstance to Père Joseph, who had been absent from Dijon at the time. Fortunately, however, Miss McGregor's letter had not been destroyed, and the worthy priest no sooner had her address, than he wrote her a long, wordy epistle of five closely-written pages, very valuable as documentary evidence of Mary's identity, and informing Miss McGregor of her departure for England nearly six months before.

Miss McGregor at once decided to go to London to communicate with Mr. Prescott, place the letters and will in his hands, and doubtless give him a severe lecture on his duty to his child.

Had she seen Mr. Earle first, her object might even then have been

Earle, who had really some reason to be uneasy at the idea that Dick would attribute it to him, had gone to the railway station to which the office errand-boy had accompanied the fugitive, in the hope of obtaining some information.

A few words with Mrs. Withers were sufficient to convince Miss McGregor that Mary Prescott and Miss Paton were one and the same person. "The only wonder was," said old Withers, "how me and Prescott never found it all out, for Lord knows she was her mother's very image; and, bless you, didn't Prescott take her for poor Mary's ghost, and faint away as soon as ever he set eyes upon her?"

No sooner did Mr. Earle return, than Miss McGregor sternly upbraided him with his conduct to his niece. He at first denied the whole thing, declaring it a mere drunken fancy of old Betty Withers; but upon Miss McGregor rashly informing him that lies were useless, as she had the priest's letter and Mrs. Prescott's last will in her pocket, he lost all self-command, and rushed forward to take them from her by force. A struggle ensued, in which Miss McGregor, notwithstanding her courage, must inevitably have been overcome, had not Mrs. Withers, who was rushing out to call some of the clerks, encountered St. John coming upstairs to inquire after Dick; and seizing hold of the astounded young officer, dragged him into the sitting-room, crying out, "Help her, help her, or he'll murder her out and out."

St. John, comprehending nothing, and seeing nothing, beyond the fact that a woman was before him succumbing under a man's brutal violence, flung himself upon Earle, and bringing to bear the triple advantage of youth, strength, and indignation, belaboured him so vigorously as to quickly succeed in disengaging him from Miss McGregor, and concentrating all his fury on his unexpected assailant. Earle, however, was both the larger and stronger man of the two, and poor St. John would probably have paid dear for his championship, had not old Withers's clamours brought up half-a-dozen of the clerks.

At the sight of his subordinates Earle abruptly desisted; and with as much dignity as he could assume in his breathless condition, told them he was really surprised they could be such fools as to pay attention to that drunken old witch's folly; that he and Captain St. John had merely been amusing themselves with a wrestling match, and that he would trouble them to return to their occupations downstairs.

The clerks, who were all afraid of him, looked dubiously at the panting St. John, who was wiping his face with the air of one who has, at least, found the wrestling match not at all to his taste, and then at Miss McGregor, who, as white as a sheet, but as calm as Juno, thanked them for their kindness in coming, but added: "I believe all

The men retired, and Mr. Earle, quickly coming to his senses, implored Miss McGregor to forget his unmanly conduct, which he assured her was the result of the terror he felt at the idea that on Dick's arrival she would place the documents in his possession. He then drew such a picture of Dick's violence, of his having very lately knocked him down and nearly killed him for a mere hasty word, that Miss McGregor was already somewhat shaken, when the effect was unconsciously heightened by Mrs. Withers. She had been out of the room to fetch some brandy, which she vainly pressed upon the indignant St. John, who though, in fact, terribly bruised and knocked about, gallantly persisted in declaring there was nothing the matter with him, he was "only a little blown."

The old woman had been roused from her usual sullen indifference of manner, by Mr Earle's insulting expressions, and she now went up to him, almost fiercely, and shaking her broom in his face, said,—

"Drunken old witch, am I, Stephen Earle! Ah! Dick will be home soon, and I hope he'll murder you outright this time, I do."

"For shame, Betty Withers!" said Miss McGregor; "go away; I am not afraid to be left while this gentleman is here. May I hope, sir," she continued, addressing St. John, "that you will kindly stay with me until I have found some respectable apartments in this neighbourhood? It is of the utmost importance I should see Mr. Prescott immediately on his return."

"I will relieve you of my presence," said Earle to Miss McGregor. "I will leave the house in order that you may remain in it undisturbed. In the course of the evening, madam, you will receive a letter from me, which will, I hope, cause you to take a different view of my conduct in this unhappy affair."

Miss McGregor bowed, and St. John laughed insultingly. In the course of the evening she received the elaborately written "defence" of which she had spoken.

(To be continued.)

WINTER DRIFT.

MUSINGS in season are going out of fashion. We no longer hail the Spring with an essay or an ode, and Summer comes and Autumn wanes without any didactic reflections on the flower in bloom or on the fall of the leaf. The uncertainty of the climate does not altogether account for this fact, although it has something to do with it, no doubt. We cannot depend on what used to be termed the vernal airs, the zephyrs arriving with the swallows; and the minstrel who tries to celebrate the smiles and tears of the traditional April finds himself like the butterfly caught in the east wind. The bard used to be a prophet, and still wishes to be so far right in his reckoning that he will not seem to be singing of the weather in another planet. Meteorological changes have thus a curious action upon specific forms of literature. The spots upon the sun's face, the course and temperature of the Gulf Stream, the cutting down of woods and forests; all these things, inasmuch as they are supposed to influence our rain-fall, snow-fall, and fog-veils, also touch the sphere of *belles lettres*, in which records of the aspects of nature were transferred into verses of celebration. Spring comes to us in a questionable shape, and we hesitate whether, instead of figuring as a young lady in light garments, she should not be muffled in a warm coat from chin to heels. Winter lingering chills the lap of May, and perhaps returns even to nip blue with a frost the nose of that merrie merrie month. The Derby has been run in a sleet storm, and the very fires of August, burning in the braziers of the poppies at the edge of the corn, have been curdled into mere grey leaves by an icy breath blown over the fields when they should have been wrapped in the warm gloom of a dew-raining summer night. It would seem as if of late years there was another falling out between Oberon and Titania.

"Therefore, the moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
That rheumatic fevers do abound :
And thorough this distemperature, we see
The seasons alter : hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose ;
And on old Hiem's thin and icy crown
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set : the spring, the summer,
The chiding autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries ; and the 'mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which."

myself have picked up a primrose in December hiding shyly under a bank of moss. It had, however, a "pale, unmarried look," and did not survive an hour after being plucked from its retreat.

Perhaps a time will come when snow will be as strange and novel a sight to us as it is to a native of Central Africa, and skates be as unfamiliar objects in London as in Bombay. And yet our winters can surprise us occasionally by reviving the traditional characteristics. It is only the oracle who speaks through an astrological almanac who can venture to predict the weather now, and the mysterious calendars, compiled by the wizards, are no more to be trusted than the glimpses into the future which are afforded to the people who cross the palm of a raccourse gipsy with silver. For instance, if I say Christmas will appear jaundiced in a yellow fog, or wet as a water-god, lo! the month is everything that a plum-pudding artist could desire! The streets are muffled in white; cabmen toss their arms about like windmills for warmth; the baked potato-man drives a roaring trade; and an old picture in the *Illustrated London News* is suddenly realized. On the other hand, if I draw visions, say of November, as it used to be, of town in brown-Holland, I will be treated to a little practical irony on the part of our climate, and the atmosphere will remain bright and sunny until no Frenchman in Leicester Square believes we have any reason for throwing ourselves off bridges. Nothing is certain, we are told, but the unforeseen, and nothing is sure about the weather, except that it will not turn out as we think. We ought, therefore, to hope for the worst.

What will winter be, from a social and literary point of view, when coals have got so dear that we must either substitute stoves or hot water pipes for grates, or go about with a portable pannikin of heat to warm our hands. The fire and the fire-grate are essentially British institutions. Cowper says of winter—

"I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fireside enjoyments, home-born happiness."

For fire-side, read "stove-side," and what an alteration there is in the picture suggested by the couplet! The hearth-rug is no longer the consecrated centre of the domestic circle. We shall not any more see faces in the fuel, and dream dreams as the black diamonds sputter and crackle into odd fantastic shapes before resolving into ashes. The word ingle-nook will lose its meaning. Our romances written for English evenings spent within sight of the sea coal will be changed, we may be sure, when we are compelled to sit down to read them before a black box invented for the economical production of caloric. Would Wordsworth enjoy this situation, seasoning his personal talk with heavenly Una, or the gentle lady married to the Moor? Of course, with the fire, we should miss the roaring of the

tempest in the chimney. The stove would be about as interesting as a warming-pan or a gasometer. There is something repulsive and practical about it. And yet when an over-indulgence in Silkstone or Wallsend spells bankruptcy, what are we to do?

I am myself a fire-worshipper, more ardent than any Persian who kneels or salaams to the day-god. I can people my bachelor hearth at any time beside Allhallow-eves with fairy-forms and old fancies, and sit for hours in reveries, with no other light in the room than the flame flaps from the fuel. The demon of diminutive proportions, which the old alchymist found in the centre of the furnace, in the shape, as well as I remember, of a ruddy mannikin, with a jaunty tail, who pirouetted amongst the glowing embers, was by no means a misanthropic goblin. He was, I have no doubt, a tricky but harmless sprite. It is this facetious Salamander who makes the whole room blink, then darken, then flash from the gloom at you once more, until the pictures on the wall come and vanish, and come again; until they seem to assume a weird and phantom character when they do present themselves. If you wish to be memory-haunted, sit alone of a winter evening before a fire, with no lamp, no light but what the coal gives. The years fall from you, the years of weariness and task work, and you are with the ghosts of the past, thinking more of them and better of them than ever you did when that past was your present. Gillian's dead, God rest her bier! What fair spectre is this, kneeling as Gillian used, next your chair? What music is this being played, far within echoing soul-chambers you might have thought deserted (never visited by you, except when your eyes are closed in sleep), music of no subtle value in design, but full now of sweet pain and sweet regret, longings to say what can never be said, full also of fond and tender conceits which can never be spoken to the only ear you would care to whisper into vows of homage and devotion for ever! Gillian's dead, God rest her bier! *Her* name was not Gillian, and you are conning over a line in a ballad; and the piano is dumb, though its mouth is open, and its keys gleam like a row of white fangs in the pulsing light and shade from the fire.

It occurs to you, that, after all, if stoves were universal, patent stoves not requiring pokers, wife-beating would be more uncommon in England than it is at present.

How telling winter is on the stage! Nothing in the way of theatrical property looks more like the real thing than theatrical snow, and I might add, the shivering of actors, who like poor Tom are a-cold. Your teeth chatter sympathetically in the stalls, when a frozen-out hero "blows his nail" and shakes the chill particles of white paper from his coat. We cannot get rid of the delusion even when the iced-melodrama is over, and the ballet in gauze and millinery for the torrid zone is turned on. An idea haunts

houses, are always effectual.

"In such a night
To shut me out! Pour on; I will endure:
In such a night as this!"

(LEAR *loquitur* on a heath before a hovel.)

The sense of fancied desolation, and at the same moment the consciousness of being snugly under cover, sheltered, while the fond foolish monarch is exposed (and still is not exposed) to the pitiless pelting of the rain and chiding of the wind, awakens a feeling of interest, concern, and enjoyment in the dullest play-frequenter who brings an imagination at all to the pit or the boxes with him.

Winter, it is admitted, is the very forcing-season of benevolence. Then it is that the genuine descendants of my Lady Bountiful collect blankets for the poor of the parish, keep on tap whole boilers full of soup for the indigent, and endeavour to postpone the application of Hodge for admittance into that charitable Bridewell, the Union. Hodge, I am sorry to say, has been known to swallow his blanket like a boa-constrictor, or rather *not* like a serpent, but in a fashion far more round-about than even the way of a reptile with its victims. He pawns his blanket and drinks the proceeds, discounting whole nights of warmth in the rug for the temporary heat procured out of gin-drams and beer-pots. But let us not be backward in subscribing to the village relief fund, or the manor-house or rectory relief fund, because there are a few black sheep (with rheumatism) in the neighbourhood. If it was easy, according to Rebecca Sharp, to be virtuous on a large income, it is not difficult, perhaps, to be temperate on strong meats and satisfying wines. Hodge in desperation may, when out of work, and out of health, be sorely tempted. The crimson curtains and the canticles of boors in chorus are too much for him as he skulks by the "Blue Lion" of a Saturday night. Once inside its portals he can purchase happiness for a shilling. 'Tis then with him, Let back and side go bare, go bare, or Let wife and child go bare, go bare, 'tis equal! Lock up the brute, of course! Who is to blame if *he* goes upon the parish, or is visited with delirium tremens, or falls to poaching and into evil courses generally? The question admits only of one answer from any properly regulated mind, and the society in which you and I, dear reader, move is naturally prepared to pronounce that obvious judgment. Let us give Belisarius—the "parralized" sergeant—a cold shoulder. The winter misery of picturesque vagrancy is, I believe, being put down or hidden or

in England for the gaseous, and the successors of Cornaro have nothing in common with the bedesman of romance. The gaunt artist in famine, who absolutely performs a kind of death-rattle upon a door-step, is an impostor no doubt, who canters home at nightfall, his pockets filled with coppers charmed from the thin purses of milliner girls, to indulge in stout and steaks. The sailor with one leg lost in the service of his country at a sea-fight, which must have taken place before he was born, is a shallow knave, and so with the rest—the sham-epileptic, the coloured chalk Raphael of the flags, who can really draw a mackerel as close to nature as several of the fishes in the cartoon of the Miraculous Draught; the acrobat, who astonishes the crowd by what old Laneham calls his “goings, turnings, tumblings, castings, hops, jumps, leaps, skips, springs, gambauds, somersaults, caputtings, and flights forward, backward, sideways, downwards, upwards, and with sundry windings, gyrings, and circumflections.” The mountebank as well as the mendicant is doomed. Fun is condemned at the fair, and the Home Secretary has been down upon the Learned Pig. Of course the march of progress must not be impeded. The high road of civilization must be cleared of show-booths, jongleurs, drones, and ragamuffins. A spectre caravan, more singular than Freiligrath has imagined flowing over the desert in the moonlight might be conceived, composed of the banished giants, skeletons, dwarfs, contortionists, five-legged sheep (in a flock!), and other *bouches inutiles* fitting or hovering round the Epsom Downs, which in a few years will be purged of all illegitimate rascality. Play up the Funeral March of the Marionette!—

“Coat of motley, cap and bells,
Over his bier shall dolefully jingle;
Conjurors all shall bear his pall
And mountebanks follow it, married and single!

Harlequin droll, thy bell shall toll,
Master Punch shall shrive and bury him;
Tumblers grin while they shove him in,
And Charon send Joe Grim-(aldi) to ferry him!”

And Doctor Marigold must vanish. In my winter evenings' ramble, I often stop before the doctor's naphtha lamp and listen to his wonderfully voluble patter. He contributes to the joyousness of the streets. His garrulous tongue soon attracts a ring of spectators, who are being gradually dissolved into customers by his melting eloquence. The joyousness of the streets on a winter's evening! The rumbling bass of the omnibus procession gathering up freights of homeward-bound passengers; the general surge of the now darkened sea of life in the

vast city ; the blazing shops, bonnets in one, beef in another, and behind a row of bottles of preserved sunset in a third, medicine for the million ; for every heart-beat of yours, faces start at you at moments so pallid and distorted by a gas glare that they seem to have a gibbering aspect you cannot get rid of the recollection of until you have turned into a bay where the houses are as still as pines in a windless grove, and through which a policeman is endeavouring to coax to a cell a prisoner in a velvet jacket and gay ribbons. This prisoner represents an interesting difficulty to the historian of European morals, but to a constable she is a common occurrence enough. If he halts while his captive bids him defiance in a laugh as harsh as the shriek of a jay, he may pause to decide whether he will be obliged to signal for a stretcher. He has nothing to do with casuistry or sentiment. He is reserved by fate, pre-ordained to discharge executive functions.

You have wandered as far as Chelsea Bridge. The moon shines on the glimmering river, the water seems almost phosphorescent in the silver-green light. Not a sound, not a stir breaks the stillness of the hour. So clear is the air that the stars do not, as they sometimes do, seem all fastened on a dark blue screen ; but they stand out, as it were, in their places, and they seem farther off than ever. Music of the spheres ! A church clock (High—the church is, curates or priests not only in vestments, but in beards) strikes eleven, but the sidereal harmonies do not break in upon the chime. It is not given to all of us to hear as much as either Pythagoras or the Reverend Edward Young. Again, before the fire, this time thinking of the ships in the Channel, for there is a storm abroad. How dark and cold it must be in such a night as this driving through the sleet, and yet you may be sure that the man who makes adulterated life-belts can eat his buttered muffin with a good conscience ! *Caveat emptor*. Selling things under false appearances is only, according to a statesman, a special form of competition. But sailors need not fear falling slates. Mr. Bernard Buntline and Mr. William Bowline are talking a sort of briny eclogue while the stiff nor'-wester screams through the cordage. "Lord help 'em ! how I pities all unhappy folks on shore now !" exclaims the pious Buntline. This is quite a common sentiment in the colliery merchant service, when the yawning brigantine has tried to hold by her rotten cable and is drifting on a lee shore.

Keats tells us that the poetry of earth is never dead, and that when the world is steeped in the sultry silence of a hot noontide, the grasshopper makes the presence of life known to us. The bards of the bushes, the minstrels of the fields, are supposed to break off their music when the harvest is reaped, the leaves fall, or the snow is on the ground. The nightingale goes away early, the lark strikes work as soon as his family is reared, both thrush and blackbird are lazy and irregular performers when the days begin to shorten ; and even

some sort or other. Not long since, in the evening of a pet day, I saw the moon rise a huge globe of mellow fire over the edge of a hill. And in a thorn-bush, which hung over a pool with a fading tinge of saffron light in it, there was sung as sweet a welcome to this unusual night as ever the famous Philomel had for the beauty of a June gloaming. It was, to be sure, a thin little pipe, but gentle and natural, and grateful to the ear as the look of a wild flower to the eye. The musician on this occasion was a wee linnet, how inspired, who can tell?—but just at that moment the vespers of the creature, in the solemn quietude of all other things, gave the fancy a worshipful hint—a lift into a prayerful mood.

Let the robin have a reasonable allowance of sunshine even in December, and he will sing for it. He must get his crust, his crumb and a warm corner in the garden, and it is then ten to one that he finds his voice, and whistles over the winding-sheet which Winter has spread on the flower-beds. I kept a yellow captive in a cage, who used regularly to have a match with a red-waistcoat when weather permitted. Red-waistcoat came to the sill for breakfast, and cast a black cock-eye at Teddy the bird, who noticed him with a good-natured chirrup. To this the robin never replied until he had finished his meal, when he would take up his quarters in a laurel, and commence to warble in short reaches waiting for the response of the canary, which was certain to be given. Teddy would also sing loudly at a thrush or a blackbird when he saw one, but they never paid the least attention to his remarks, though he seemed as abusive and personal as the cantatrice who expresses rage and indignation in the opera. When snow has been a fortnight or three weeks on the ground, there are few birds indeed who have heart or hope enough to give tongue. There is then a desolate silence on mere and fen and forest, such as aeronaut or arctic travellers tell us they have felt themselves shrink from in the limitless spaces of the air, or in the ghastly dead-lands of the Pole. The birds are enduring the horrors of a famine. You will meet vast congregations of titlarks, linnets, hedge-sparrows, yellow-hammers on the quest for food, joyless troops these on laggard wings, not a note amongst the whole flock as they search for some moist place where the earth may have thawed, or scatter and forage feebly under hedgerows by the roadside where the sun may have melted the snow. Sometimes they are joined by the starlings and the fieldfares, who are on these occasions as mute as if they were in glass cases. The "black" frost makes matters if possible worse. Starvation then stares every bird in the face who cannot bring himself to accept relief from the dwellers in houses. Thrushes suffer fearfully, and are so exhausted

Blackbirds are of a hardier constitution. But this weather has its consolations for us who can protect ourselves from its inclemency. To hear the "honk-honk" of wild geese over your roof-tree as you lie in bed of a winter's night makes your crib warmer and cosier. These birds solemnly presage the frost, and you may be sure that from the vast height at which they soar they look down on the world whitening and hardening. Next day your window panes are covered with arabesque patterns, the most fantastic of scrolls and designs. As George MacDonald puts it,—

"With clear dead gleam the morning white
Comes through the window-panes,
The clouds have fallen all the night
Without the noise of rains."

The early sky is half-pink, half-purple, with one diamond point of white fire set in the darker background of the west, from which the curtain of night is only just moving off. The sun then touches the mountains, and their grey forms are suffused with a rosy tinge, which quickly changes to a bright marble hue. A convention of rooks talk on the increasing hardships of the weather in the elms. And I am away after an early breakfast, gun in hand, up the hills. The air is intoxicating in its keen freshness. Everything glitters, and sparkles, and shines; and as you gaze down from the skirts of the wood the sea stretches off endless leagues, phantom sails flitting on the verge, and the vast plain of water itself unruffled as a tarn in the mountains. The whistle of the plover is borne from the fens, and then the gradual thunder of a train. Now a rustle from the covert, and something flashes from the leaves, a sharp crack from the breech-loader and the woodcock lies on the frost-gleaming grass. Here is a glen, where a stream tinkles amongst icicles, while the yellow fairy coin is scattered about in all directions. A teal darts from an emerald patch round a spring, but he is saved, for in the very line of fire is a milkmaid scouring her pail in the brook, and carolling at the work in a fashion which would have delighted Master Walton, that sly connoisseur of rustic sopranos. By fir grove, and fen, and valley until at dusk upon the high road. The grip of the frost tightens more and more on the land. The rooks are holding anxious parliaments of a morning. I travel towards a pond in a wood. The atmosphere is full of resinous odours, and of the musk of dead leaves. Shod with the steel of swiftness, winged at the heels, how delicious to slide, and swerve, and swoop with the mere effort of volition round and about, in and out this picturesque nook, with the lichen-barked trees at its edge, and the merry ringing of the skates following you wherever you fly! But you will not have this enjoyment long to

yourself. Already four gentlemen have arrived at the bank, and one has hobbled in a gouty manner to the ice. He makes a nervous rush forward at the instigation of a—well, of a good-natured friend, and after three frantic plunges, and a grasp at the cantle of the papery-horned moon, and another for a hand from heaven or earth to save him, he hammers the ice with his head, and for the moment feels as if his nostrils were stuffed with the clay of the grave, while a million of fire-flies are passing in motes before his eyes.

Winter of course was the season of obsolete joviality. The mahogany tree was in full foliage when the wind soughed through the bare branches of the forest.

“Come, merrily push round the toddy,
The cold winter’s nights are set in ;
To a roquelaire wrapped round the body
Add a lining of lamb’s wool within !”

Macaulay will have it that the ancient Romans gossiped and revelled by the hearth, and listened to the story of how Horatius held the bridge when the logs of Algidus roared in the fire louder than the hungry wolves outside the cottage. With us the race of Tossopot is no more. Potations have become milder, and so bacchanalian minstrelsy is at a discount. Winter was long ago frequently made an excuse for hard drinking. You defied the cold as long as you held on to the decanter. The poets, to a man, were on the side of the toppers. Our English Anacreons were the bitter foes of temperance, and appeared to regard abstinence from the bottle as a sin against Nature. And a winter-gathering was incomplete without the ale-can going round, or the flowing bowl being passed from hand to hand. Is this so now ? We know it is not in London at any rate. People in society do not sit round hearths, tell ghost stories, and grow what used to be termed fast and furious in mirth. It is really a matter of fact that crickets are leaving the chimneys, while a modern fine lady would as soon go in the way of hearing a stable-boy play the Jew’s harp, as be within ear-shot of a vulgar kettle singing on the coals. The urn makes a poor attempt at music, but your kettle is a wonderful performer, and for those who are old enough to remember when it was allowed to chaunt and purr in the parlour, its voice is as moving as the ebb and flow of organ chords in a country churchyard at evening, when the notes stream from the open door around the tombs and the watchful elms. In Ireland a kettle was always kept on the hob to make whisky punch for the passing stranger, and the hospitable custom was only abandoned when urns were introduced simultaneously with a change of landlords throughout the island.

The country of Toyland is a country of frost and snow. Observe that the animals, the fauna proper to it, are all furnished with thick coats ; the sheep are fleecier and fluffier than butcher’s sheep ; the

billy-cock who might defy the weather anywhere. Take Jack—spring-back Jack—who resides in the box, he is also well prepared for the severer contingencies of climate, and mounts a perfectly natural comforter, in the shape of whiskers constructed of the débris of old muffs; he is no summer companion, but we used to enjoy his society, sitting on the hearth-rug when the candles were lit. He had a constant and flattering stare of admiration at our proceedings of a night, and he submitted to be shut up as uncomplainingly as a poor relation. The burly humming-top, none of your cranky, spiteful, outlandish contrivances which now pass under the name, but a fat portly globe which buzzed before the fender with a dignified boom, worthy of a bee sailing down upon an acre of honey-suckle,—that *was* a toy for a winter's evening! We knew nothing of clock-work mice, of miniature steam-engines, of dolls which could open their eyes and squeak on being squeezed like human folk, of scientific playthings, in short, and if we were shown a magic lantern, we were kept in blessed ignorance of its connection with optics by the governess. Every coral rattle now should have its utilitarian intentions; the infant takes in knowledge at the gums, and the discovery of the solar spectrum is revealed through the kindergarten method of coloured balls to the philosopher in leading-strings who still has a tooth for toffy.

When the fire goes out in the grate there is a text for a sermon, or trite discourse. The sun rises or sets; the seasons follow their allotted order; the heavens are bright or downcast; and we will have it that Nature sympathises with us. . . . How hard we try to think so in our pictures, in our poetry, in our common prose, when the crags frown and the meadows smile, and we survey everything through our own moods. The glamour is false, but we would not deprive ourselves of the power of submitting to it if we could. We need not carry the sentiment far enough to come under the reproach of Paganism, which Mr. Mivart tells us we may be liable to if we are not watchful over ourselves. We may not necessarily descry these "tributes to Alma Venus," which the philosopher perceives in the Spring song of birds (what about the Autumn song and Winter songs of some?), in the tints and perfumes of flowers, when we are looking at or thinking of the world we live in, which may and has been contemplated from another point of view. Pan is again in our midst. We must draw apart from his territory, shut our ears to his rituals. But surely there can come no harm to us if, in our old blundering fashion, we trust from time to time that mother-earth feels for God's children? Poets without end, never thinking for a moment of Alma Venus, and unlearned in the obstetrics of vegetable physiology, have innocently enough dwelt on the beauties of the external world, and

griefs. We have a lurking superstition in our minds that the skies should be draped in gloom when we follow to their last home a dear parent, a wife, or child, and we find instead that the road lies through sunshine and song of birds, and sight of growing flowers, or through the still ample beauty of a bright winter noon. Why do not the clouds mourn with us, and the trees hang their heads, and the sea near by sigh for our sorrow? We cheat ourselves curiously on the brink of this fancy when rain sobs on the hearse, or when the weather is propitious for the bridal. We are for ever trying to bridge that absolute isolation of which every human soul is conscious in its relations not only to every other, but to its dealings with the material external world altogether. Let us continue to take our moral lessons and indulge in moral reflections upon the seasons. The spring-time of youth, the summer of manhood, the autumn of decline, the winter of decay—in these you have the round of texts complete! You can expand them infinitely and with illustrations borrowed from the abundant treasures of didactic eloquence which are extant on the subject. There, the fire burns up with a sudden splutter again, and my driftwood of winter fancies for feeding it with is exhausted. The reader can easily find fuel of the same kind to hand, but we cannot warm our shins at an imaginary hearth, or feel the desolation of lonely ingle-nooks, when those we remember by our own have travelled into lands beyond the seas, have passed out of sight into wide-apart roads, or have left us to know the mystery of death which in a little while must be revealed to us.

W. BARRY.

GEORGE HERBERT AS A LOVER OF NATURE.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—It seems to me that Mr. Hutchison does George Herbert's poetry far less than justice in thus writing of it in the October Number of your Magazine :—"Of any love or special knowledge of the physical world there is scarcely a trace. One of his biographers has discovered a solitary verse, on the faith of which he complacently assumes that Herbert was thoroughly alive to the sweet influences of nature."

I give up the "*special knowledge*." Herbert may have known more than he has shown, but certainly we shall only rarely find in his poems a manifestation of that intimate acquaintance with the characteristic minutiae of natural objects which makes reading Tennyson as delightful as wandering through a wood in Spring. Still is it fair to say that Herbert had no "love of the physical world"—was *not* "thoroughly alive to the sweet influences of nature?"

Trusting to memory, and when that fails me to hunting, let me cull an anthology of lines and stanzas which seem to me to prove the opposite :—

"How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clean
Are thy returns! e'en as the flowers in Spring;
To which, besides their own demean,
The late-past frosts tributes of pleasure bring.
Grief melts away
Like snow in May,
As if there were no such cold thing.

"Who would have thought my shrivell'd heart
Could have recover'd greenness? It was gone
Quite underground; as flowers depart
To see their mother-root, when they have blown;
Where they together
All the hard weather,
Dead to the world, keep house unknown.

* * * * *
"And now in age I bud again,
After so many deaths I live and write;
I once more smell the dew and rain."

"We are the trees, whom shaking fastens more,
While blustering winds destroy the wanton bowers
And ruffle all their curious knots and store."

"Or shall each leaf,
Which falls in Autumn, score a grief?"

"With thee
O let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories:
Then shall the fall further the flight in me."

"I had my wish and way:
My days were strew'd with flowers and happiness;
There was no month but May."

"All things are busy; only I
Neither bring honey with the bees,
Nor flowers to make that, nor the husbandry
To water these."

"Listen, sweet Dove, unto my song,
And spread thy golden wings in me;
Hatching my tender heart so long,
Till it get wing, and fly away with thee."

"The jealous Turkey brought his coral chain!"

"O that I were an Orange-tree,
That busy plant!
Then should I ever laden be,
And never want
Some fruit for him that dresseth me."

"A willing shiner, that shall shine as gladly
As frost-nipt suns look sadly."

"What hath not man sought out and found,
But his dear God? who yet his glorious law
Embosoms in us, mellowing the ground
With showers and frosts, with love and awe."

"Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night,
For thou must die."

"Sweet rose"——

but everybody who has ever read anything of Herbert's knows
"LXIII. Virtue."

"The stars have us to bed;
Night draws the curtain, which the sun withdraws:
Music and light attend our head."

* * * * *

"More servants wait on man

Than he'll take notice of : in every path
 He treads down that which doth befriend him,
 When sickness makes him pale and wan.
 Oh mighty love ! Man is one world, and hath
 Another to attend him."

" But time did beckon to the flowers, and they
 By noon most cunningly did steal away,
 And wither'd in my hand."

" One might have sought and found thee presently
 At some fair oak, or bush, or cave, or well :
 Is my God this way ? No, they would reply ;
 He is to Sinai gone, as we heard tell :
 List, ye may hear great Aaron's bell."

" Thou pull'st the rug, and wilt not rise,
 No, not to purchase the whole pack of stars,
 There let them shine,
 Thou must go to sleep or dine."

" The bird that sees a dainty bower
 Made in the tree, where she was wont to sit,
 Wonders and sings, but not his power
 Who made the arbour : this exceeds her wit."

" And ever as they mount, like larks they sing."

" First, Beauty crept into a rose."

" Each creature hath a wisdom for his good.
 The pigeons feed their tender offspring, crying,
 When they are callow ; but withdraw their food,
 When they are fledged, that need may teach them flying."

" Bees work for man ; and yet they never bruise
 Their master's flower, but leave it, having done,
 As fair as ever, and as fit for use ;
 So both the flower doth stay, and honey run."

" Most herbs that grow in brooks are hot and dry."

" I sought thee in a secret cave,
 And ask'd, if Peace were there.
 A hollow wind did seem to answer, No !
 Go seek elsewhere."

" We are the earth ; and they,*
 Like moles within us, heave and cast about :
 And till they foot and clutch their prey,
They never cool, much less give out."

" Hark how the birds do sing,
 And woods do ring.
 All creatures have their joy, and man hath his."

* Afflictions.

"If as the winds and waters here below
Do fly and flow,
My sighs and tears as busy were above."

"O mother dear and kind,
Where shall I get me eyes enough to weep,
As many eyes as stars? since it is night,
And much of Asia and Europe fast asleep,
And e'en all Africk."

"But I a silly fly,
That live or die,
According as the weather falls."

"Flowers look about, and die not in their prime."

Finally, in the Latin-verses beginning,

"*Horti, deliciae Dominæ, marcescite tandem,*"

are we not reminded by.

"*Terram et funus olent flores . . .*
* * * * *
In terram violæ capite inclinatur opaco."

of? —

"The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,
As a sick man's room when he taketh repose
An hour before death;
* * * * *
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
Over its grave 't the earth so chilly;
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily."

I think that I have made out my case, or rather that Herbert has made out his own, against Mr. Hutchison's heresy.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

GEORGIOPHILUS.

BROTHERS AND LOVERS.

VII.

MARGUERITE donned a trim black gown and neat white collar—every woman's test, the brunette's triumph—and went dutifully day after day to her work at the *café*. In those times of lost husbands, brothers, sons, sweethearts innumerable, the loss of one young, unknown girl's love passed well nigh unnoticed, even in the little town of Belle Chance. But none who entered the *café* could forget or cease to deplore, when they saw the sorrow-stricken maiden. Her calm, mournful resignation, her manner so suddenly softened and matured, told of the depth to which a deep nature had been stirred, and commanded respectful pity. There were no boisterous jokes, no lively flirtations now on the part of the careless soldiers. Sorrow bade a rough world stand afar off, and it so stood wondering. Ninon did all tact taught her to cheer Marguerite; but Ninon could not, alas! use her old remedies, confessing, with a sigh, that little lay in her power but to leave the wounded one to the healing power of time and natural buoyancy, and the friction of every-day life. She would have kept her god-daughter with her day and night, away from the scene and reminiscences of that fatal day. But Marguerite would not. She pleaded her lonely father, who required company; but there was a lonely heart as well that sought companionship in solitude. On her nightly walk home, alone, she turned aside to the little cemetery to pray a moment by a newly-made grave. After the evening meal, she wended—come fair weather or foul—to a dark spot in the thick copse, there to sit, with her hands clasped across her knees, weeping a little and thinking much.

Is it sacrilegious, is it unchivalrous to look into Marguerite's fluttering heart and see what is there passing? She did not think much, in the sense of connected conscious thinking, of Jacques. True, he was always present in her mind; he seemed to permeate, to be her mind; all her thoughts were twin thoughts, Jacques ever one of them. She loved to kneel by his tomb, to sit where he died, to dote over all his relics; but she did not weep much, for she hardly realized the materialness of her loss. The past appeared a dream, a pleasant but short dream, and so very far away—it seemed but a faint abiding memory of a previous existence. But on one thing she thought long and anxiously and self-tormentingly. This was Jacques's last wish, the very last, hardly uttered, dying wish. Were she and Pierre bound to fulfil it under all or any circumstances, because he had wished it? Must she marry Pierre if he asked her? If he did

not ask her, ought she to remind him of his duty to the dead? Margot was not altogether unreasoning in her reasonings as to this. Even great grief cannot banish common sense. She recognized perfectly that Jacques would rather desire it might never happen than that the union should be an unhappy one. She knew he could only mean, marry with love and good-will on both sides. She did not allow that to influence herself. She was ready, because Jacques wished it. As part of her martyrdom and devotion she could compel herself to love and be happy with Pierre; at least, she thought she could, which was the same thing for her argument: certainly she could pretend to, so that the blunt Pierre should not find out the sham. But then Jacques cared for his brother, and desired his happiness as well. Ought she to force Pierre, out of compassion, or a perchance mistaken sense of duty, to marry her who might fail to render his life happy, who might make it only miserable? Did Jacques's request go so far as that? She thought not. She was very nearly sure not; but she wished Pierre would put her out of the difficulty. She would be really a good wife to him; she would force herself to love him, if that were necessary, because Jacques wished it. It would not be such a great love as she had for Jacques, of course; but then Jacques could not expect *that*, if he realised what her love for him was, nor would he wish that she should so readily take that love away from him, and give it to another.

In such melancholy-wise passed Marguerite's thinking hours, with such self-disregard and love-penance did they ever conclude. Meantime, the days slipped away, terrible days of suspense for all, weary days of wondering for Marguerite, wondering what the end of her almost unearthly experience should be; for what fate she was destined. Surely it was an unkind deity that had picked out this simple, happy maiden to bear such strange and great crosses. But her church told Margot not to repine; and she drifted along as the current carried her, for she felt sure that Jacques was watching over her, that he would guide her; and whether the path were good or bad, natural or unnatural, smooth or rough, she cared not as long as it was the path he chose. Marguerite was ignorant—kind charity would use no harsher word—of the command: "Thou shalt have no other god before me."

December came, and winter with it. The trees were bare of leaves, but laden with pendant snow fringes. The white roofs cut sharply the clear sky. The homeliest sound made a cheerful resonance in the frosty air. Dull, bleak November had succeeded the genial glow of summer: it had passed not indeed again into the same sunny warmth, but by a healthy reaction into invigorating winter. Yet it was still dull, bleak November in Margot's heart.

With December came again terrible scenes, longer, more cruel, more crushing than any gone before. For four days and four nights did the earth-storm rage around and overhead, leaving wreck and

ruin and death in the wake of its gory mantle. On the last evening Marguerite ventured from the *café* on her too long-neglected pilgrimage—neglected for four whole days. None but her practised eye could have discovered Jacques's grave in the down-trodden, relic-strewn cemetery; but she found it, and, kneeling beside a poor soldier boy who had gone like *him* to his long home, offered up her evening prayer. Then she hurried down the lane, to the old footpath in the copse. By the stile was a body. She shuddered, for Tom Courtenay lay there, staring up into the blue sky, as she had seen her poor Jacques do. She prayed he might have no betrothed to inherit such agony as hers—agony that all may bear, none may share. She passed on, and shivered again, for a body was stretched on almost the very spot where Jacques had fallen; but the face was downwards. Marguerite did not fear the dead: she had never possessed any such morbid sensitiveness, and of late had lived with the dead—had been bound to a corpse. Yet a reverent awe came upon her at the strange fatality. Would this new blood wash away the stain of that other?

She knelt down, as was her wont, silently upon the snow, when the evening stillness was broken by a groan. She started; then this man was not dead but wounded. Had Heaven sent her thus a sacred trust on the spot where her treasure had been taken from her? The groan was repeated. Marguerite tenderly laid her hand upon the sufferer.

"Can I do anything for you?" she said, and then assisted the attempt he made to turn on his side. She caught sight of the face and fell back with a suppressed shriek—Pierre lay wounded where his brother had died.

Shot through the chest by a stray bullet, as the last wave of battle swept over the plain, cut off ere he could make good his flight into the forest, by the well-known wood-paths he had instinctively sought, Pierre had fallen and was slowly stiffening to death on the snow. The sight of Marguerite sent a warm pulse of blood through him, her presence nerved his waning strength, her voice dispelled the wearying brain-cloud that had been mastering every sense; he raised himself with an effort indeed, but he raised himself to a sitting posture, and said feebly—

"You are just in time, Marguerite; you have saved my life."

His words completed the change that had as suddenly been wrought in Margot. The sight of him had startled her dormant senses into action, his presence awoke her to the knowledge that she lived and must live, his voice cleft the atmosphere of dreams and brought her back to a real, working world, that buries its dead out of its sight and then does whatsoever its hand findeth to do. Her eyes "sparkled the true Promethean fire"—of work in the present, despite a visionary sacred past—of duty to be performed, however many pleasures were dead and gone. Marguerite started to her feet—and into life.

"I shall run to the farm and send them to bring you home; they

once for a doctor.

"Stay, stay," cried Pierre, arresting her nimble feet. "It will alarm them less if I walk home; believe me I can easily walk that short distance—alone."

"With your aid," he would have said, but he dared not. He would make the attempt unsupported rather than let her go even for a few moments. Marguerite said it for him; she feared, as he did, the effect upon his parents.

"I don't think you can go alone, Pierre: perhaps, if I help you, we can get along. Lean upon me, and let us try."

Pierre did lean upon her; he was afraid to think how heavily, but he could not help it; he was very weak, and the short walk to the farm seemed terribly long, even with Margot by his side supporting him. But she was no slender weakling, and bore him up bravely until he staggered across the threshold prostrated by the inevitable reaction. The effort had sorely taxed him, and he lay insensible and groaning until the doctor arrived.

Marguerite showed all a woman's bravery. She solaced the women and encouraged the men; she prepared everything for the sufferer's comfort; she courageously assisted the doctor in his terrible task; she received all his orders and instructions; she soothed Pierre into a refreshing slumber, and installed herself as nurse—astonishing all who had thought her once an unfeeling useless girl, lately a sullen half-mad woman.

But Marguerite was made of the sterling stuff so many women are made of, so few have a chance of showing. The world tries to crush it out of women, and then abuses them for wanting it.

VIII.

DAY after day, night after night, passed anxiously, wearily away, as Pierre hovered on the shadowy confines between life and death. The wound, a serious one from the first, had been rendered highly dangerous by exposure, while the deceitful transient effort he had made in walking to the farm, completely exhausted the little remaining strength, and gave a severe shock to the strong system. So he lay waiting while Margot sat watching.

But slowly care and skill, aided nobly by a strong vitality and a strong will, gained the mastery. The patient was pronounced out of danger, and slowly regained strength and health. Thereafter his most potent salve was Marguerite's presence. It cheered and contented him. No wonder then he got better; *physic with contentment* is a great gain to the surgeon. Peevish discontent has a goodly number of deaths to answer for. He forgot his pain as he watched her sit by his side or glide softly about the room, his fever fled away at the touch of her gentle hand.

"What if it should ever be?" he would muse. "But that surely were too great bliss. Ah, if I had been less of a fool! Had I known both her and myself better! Had I seen how great she is, how little I am! Had I tried to make myself meet for her, rather than to make her fit for me, it might have been otherwise. Perhaps if I can show myself in some degree worthy she may have compassion; if I venture in faith and true loyalty to kiss the hem of her garment, she may turn to me and raise me, and perchance deign to love me. She may do it, because it was Jacques's last wish; but yet I think not; she is too good to marry me if she could not a little love me, if she could not honestly foresee happiness for us. Were she to do so, I wonder if I should have the courage to refuse; should I be brave enough to say, I love you too well to marry you not loving me, I cannot make you unhappy? I hope I might be able so to do, but I pray I may never be in such a case."

Then Pierre would humbly turn his face to the wall,—that Marguerite might see no shadow of pain or perplexity pass over it,—and listen in a mechanical way to Margot reading, drinking in, not sayings, witty, wise, or good, but a rich voice, like distant music "in linked sweetness long drawn out."

Meantime what thought Marguerite herself as she read—she read just as mechanically as Pierre listened—or, having dropped her work into her lap, watched him as he slept? If not so well as he hoped, yet assuredly not so badly as he feared.

"Is this really Pierre?" she asked herself. "Is this gentle, submissive, contented patient, the rough, sullen, ill-natured Pierre I used to fear so? Did I not know, or has the past changed him? Indeed a woman might love him very easily and very well,—were her heart her own, had she any love left unburied. But am I altogether right? Ought we to bury away the good and fair love God has given us? May it not be duty to love where we can if we cannot love where we would? Has this great, powerful for good or evil, love been bestowed to be used as we think best or for the fulfilling of our own little joys? Surely not, else why should a good God remove so often that on which we have foolishly set our hearts? He can only do that to make us love more nobly and more to his glory? This must be why Jacques was taken from me. I know I have been better and less worldly since, but God would not take away a great life for such a little gain; kill a noble man that a weak woman may live better. He must have intended Pierre to be the greater, and taken this terrible and inscrutable way of manifesting his greatness. And perhaps even He intended that I and Pierre should love each other for the good and happiness of us both. He may have been speaking by the mouth of Jacques that day. If He should lead Pierre to love me and say so to me, I shall take it as his own call, and I cannot refuse; if not, can He mean me—poor, weak, wicked me—for something nobler? Am I destined to be taken from this earth to him, or to his

it, lest it come between them and his glory. I wish I could see clearly."

So Marguerite groped along darkly, longing for the light. So these two silently thought each of the other, until their thoughts got wonderfully entangled and were wont to run astray into most devious by-paths. Now they soared high on hope's dreams, again sank low amid dread fears. How each wished for the time when they could talk freely, for each thought to see in an accidental tone, in an unguarded phrase, perhaps in an overflowing confession, some indication of what was passing in the other's breast.

But it was long ere Pierre was allowed to talk. A shot through one's lungs is a sad foe to conversation, so but the most necessary remarks were permitted. Even when light conversation was sanctioned, Marguerite was too good a nurse to tempt him to overtalk or agitate himself by touching on such a theme.

Meanwhile, Pierre grew stronger every day, and at last his father and mother and Baptiste and a few neighbours were allowed not only to see him and shake his hand, but to have short talks with him. One day Marguerite left his mother by his side and went for a walk in the orchard, to catch a whiff of fresh air.

The old mother sat stroking her son's hand, and cheering him or being cheered. After a little, she said,—

"Tell me about my poor Jacques, Pierre; I was so deadened at the time, and you went away so suddenly, I never heard *all* about it. And as for Margot, one dared not come near it. She but said 'Hush!' and turned away."

So Pierre, with a bitter pain at his heart, told the false story, putting in as many of Jacques's words and as much of the truth as he could.

"And what were his last words, Pierre, his very last words?"

"They were for Marguerite, mother: she lay nearest his heart, so his very last thoughts were of her. He hoped I would look after her, and he hoped she would marry happy."

"Hoped she would marry happy, poor boy! And did he not say whom he would have her marry?"

"No, mother; we fancied he had some one in his head, but he was gone ere he could say the name. He only hoped she would marry happy."

Pierre turned his face to the wall, but Marguerite caught the pained expression it bore. She had entered quietly, and caught the last sentence as well. Her gentle voice startled both.

"You have been letting him talk too much. He looks quite tired. You must leave him now and let me read him to sleep."

The mother kissed her son and went away. Marguerite's voice quivered strangely when she spoke again.

"Pierre, you should not talk so much, you should not allow yourself to be flurried and tired thus."

"Ah, I am not tired with speaking, Marguerite. But why has your voice altered so? Why do you speak in that way? Did it hurt you to hear me tell my poor mother about—about that? I could not tell her all the truth, could I? She would have set her heart upon it, poor soul!"

"And why not?"

"Why not, Marguerite?—and you——?"

"Jacques wished it, why should not his mother—why should not I? I do not say I do, Pierre; but what were strange in my doing so?"

Marguerite was alarmed at her own boldness, but she had been led on by fate. Here was a favourable opportunity of reading her future—of knowing Pierre's mind. So she remained calm and collected, speaking with a brave, firm voice now she had begun.

Pierre's eyes shone with a glad, trusting light. Was it Marguerite spoke thus to him?

"Marguerite, do I hear aright? Do you mean the thought is not utterly abhorrent to you?"

"Why should it be, Pierre?"

"And not only because he wished it? It were a sin to agree for that reason only. I cannot have it so. But can you love me a little, only a little, for myself?"

"Why should I not?" she replied, with a kindly glance that told Pierre there was reason why she should rather than why she should not.

"Yet you take my agreement strangely for granted," she continued, quaintly. "*Can you love me, Pierre?*"

"Love you?——"

"Hush, let me finish. I will not have you marry me out of compassion or kindness, or because Jacques wished it. You must be sure of your own mind; do you really love me?"

Had great wonder and joy driven Pierre mad—been too much for that weary, tortured brain—broken the strings of that heart bursting with emotions long pent up? With a mighty effort he sat upright—the first time since he had lain down,—and addressed Margot with a wild passionateness that startled her at first, and defied all attempts at soothing.

"Do I really love you, Marguerite? Do you not, have you not seen it? Do I not love you more than tongue can tell? Do you not know I would have given my life a hundred times to hear from you such words as you have now spoken? Have I not loved you since we were boy and girl together—madly all my life?"

"All your life!" said Marguerite, with the look she bore when Jacques died, and in the same *far away* voice. Did she not believe him?

"Yes, all my life," said he, wildly. "Was it not as much for my own great love of you as for aught else I accepted you as a sacred charge from Jacques? Had I not loved you so, would I have so slightly risked my life——?"

Mad Pierre! False to Margot, to Jacques, most false to yourself. Why not bravely and modestly have spoken out the truth? You *would* have done it all for love of Jacques alone! Marguerite would have honoured you; the truth is too late now.

"Stop, stop," shrieked Marguerite. "I thank a merciful God for preserving me from you! I see it all now. You dared not avow your love while Jacques lived; you dare avow it now when you have murdered him;" and the girl fled from the room, while Pierre strove to detain her, and, with choking voice, to call her back.

Marguerite, rushing downstairs to weep in the orchard, heard the doctor's voice below, and hastened back to a little room of her own, in a distant corner of the house. She flung herself upon the bed, and there lay, at times weeping hysterically, for the most part unconscious. She only noted one thing—the great stillness that reigned in the house.

Marguerite must have fallen asleep, for she started up hurriedly at the sound of a knocking at her door. On opening it, the doctor stood there.

"I fear I have awaked you, mademoiselle?"

What did his strange visit, his untoward gravity mean? Marguerite felt a sickening faintness steal over her, as she asked, dreamily—

"What has happened?"

"What I feared for Pierre. The sudden bursting of a blood-vessel in the lungs——"

"He is dead, then?"

"It must have been almost instantaneous. He made a hard fight, for I found him slipped half from the bed to the floor, but it must have been very short."

These and other details Marguerite knew not until long afterwards, for with the inward heart-cry, "Have I murdered him?" she fainted.

* * * * *

"Adieu, Margot," said Ninon, weeping; while even old Baptiste's eyes watered more than usual. "What shall I do with your *dôt*, darling? Alas, that it should come to this, Margot!"

"Nay, godmother, you know best what to do with it. Some small portion, however, I should like you to give to some happy girl on her happy wedding to a happy lover. Good-bye!"

So Marguerite went from many weeping eyes to a convent far away.

JOHN ADAM.

ON BEING RAMSHACKLE.

SOME are born ramshackle; some achieve ramshackleness (without intending it); others have ramshackleness thrust upon them (without desiring it). I was born ramshackle. And it is a great privilege. I have heard my father say that the family arms are ermine and roses. If so, I wish it were easy to dispose the elements of the scutcheon in such a way as to symbolise that order in disorder, that "sweet disorder," as the poet says, which is the essence of ramshackleness, or, for short, we will say Ramshackle. The ermine should stand for order,—the dark cuneiform spots in regular array. If I wore an ermine tippet, like a lord chief baron or some other great personage, do you think I would wear it awry? Not I, sooth; any more than I would permit my pictures to be framed or the frames to be adjusted in my ramshackle work-room at other than true angles. But the perky roses, stuck in the three spaces of the scutcheon, I detest. These I would break up into what George Robins called, or is said to have called, a litter of roses. True, the Garter king at arms, or his deputy, or whoever it is that settles such matters, might find it difficult to represent roses in a litter; but that is his business. A coat of arms is, as one should say, a coat of arms; and heraldic painters should have their own ways and means of doing things pictorially.

There are many ways of being what is called ramshackle. Probably most persons think ramshackleness is a mere form of slovenliness; but this is not so. It would be far nearer the mark to say that ramshackleness is naturalness. It is the *manière d'être* of the noble savage in polite society. There is something of it in Gothic architecture, and it has always been present in small quantities in English society. But very seldom pure. No man can be truly ramshackle who is self-conscious in the sense,—I grant you a very odd and twisted sense, but still a sense in which the word is often applied,—in the sense of caring to attract notice. We have always had in this country a breed or several breeds of "eccentrics," as they are called. You may read of them in queer old volumes entitled "Eccentric Biographies," relating chiefly to rich men who went about in the same suit for twenty or thirty years; clever ladies who made a point of having holes in their stockings; disappointed lovers who never washed their faces or allowed their rooms to be dusted; bucks who minced, or stalked up and down Bond Street in pale scarlet or turquoise

be stared at, or talked about, just as Abernethy made a trade of giving rough answers to fine ladies who laced tight, and false dyspeptics who might have been well if they had chosen. No born ramshackle was ever a dilettante at it. True ramshackleness is nature protesting against over-civilization.

When very young indeed, I read in the old "Mirror" of Mr. Timbs an anecdote of some man of letters or antiquarian, who, being unexpectedly visited by a prince of the blood—I think it was a royal duke—had the tea equipage placed upon a pile of books that was handy for the purpose, or something of the kind, I forget the exact circumstances. The writer who told the anecdote made a great fuss about what he considered a sad breach of good manners, and a striking example of absence of mind in the host; but, as a little boy, I used to be unspeakably puzzled by his high-polite comments. Why should the host not have put the tea-tray on the pile of books, if that was the handy and natural thing to do? The reason would not come—there was, in fact, no reason to be had for asking. If the host was natural and simple-hearted in what he did, that was an instance of the true ramshackleness, though a very trivial one. A fellow who was born ramshackle would go much farther than that;—and only fools would stare or exclaim at him. Those who never in their lives had the moral courage to do an original thing, however plainly dictated by the truth of the situation, may call out, "You do it to appear singular;" but the true Ramshackle can defy augury. There is a special providence in whatever he does under the guidance of his dæmon.

Ramshackleness is not more distinct from affected interruptions of customary routine than it is from slovenly or unwillingly incurred disorder. When we remove from one house to another our things are at first—and sometimes the "at first" lasts a pretty long time—I say, our things are at first in some disorder, necessarily so. But this is not the dæmon; it is fate. There is no true ramshackle in disarrangements which we cannot help; much less in positive inconvenience under the same condition. Ramshackle must be with pure intent, or with felicitous absence of intention. The poet's "sweet disorder in the dress" may be beautiful and modest too, but if it is designed it is immodest, unless, indeed, it enters into the scope of some general artistic design. Just so there is ramshackleness which is insolence; while there is ramshackle which is of the nature of true humour, even of noble or poetic humour. I call Caperna a ramshackle place; but I would black Garibaldi's boots for him, and kiss his feet when I had done.

Ramshackleness is not only not shabbiness, it is almost inconceivably remote from it. Shabby clothes, when I was forced to wear

them, used to cause me the most poignant shame, and I think rightly so. It is not that they prove poverty, but that they are hideous, and incline to be noisome. And, another thing,—to wear shabby clothes would be in my case the miserable confession of a bondage that made my heart sick. If I went along the streets in ignominiously shabby clothes, and I saw the averted eye of the acquaintance who wanted to dodge me, or the insolent glance of the “full-fed ruffian” stranger, gorgeous from his tailor’s creative hand, I should burn at the ear-tips, and gnash my teeth. But if I spoke to the curled cad, it would be in terms like these:—“Because I am forced to earn my living, I am forced to comply with your thick-headed notions about dress,—coat, such; trousers, such; waistcoat, ~~such~~; hat, such; and the like. And when I have not money enough to renew, from time to time, the gloss and the cut of your beastly ugly inventions, I become shabby. It is my misfortune, sir; and it is my sin and shame to feel forced to wear such ugly things as these tailor’s devilries are when outworn. But if you would let me have my honest way, if you would tolerate me for any social purpose (necessary in the case of a man who has to work for his clothes before he wears them) in clothes of my own choosing, I would never look shabby. You would see, sir, that I would manage to present a pleasing, or at lowest a not displeasing appearance upon an income of nothing-a-year. I would, at this moment, undertake for one pound sterling to put you into a far prettier and more serviceable suit of clothes than you now wear at a cost of four or five. Put *that* in your pipe and smoke it! I am ashamed of shabbiness, because it is ugly—an affront to the sun and the sweet brows of ladies; but I will put on ramshackle attire to-morrow, if you will let me go about and earn my bread in it. But if you think I take *your* view of the shame of shabby attire, you are wrong. ‘You common cry of curs, whose breath I hate, as reek o’ the rotten fens,’ do you think, because I retire in my enforced shabbiness, that I am allowing you to ‘cut’ me? Not so, I assure you; far otherwise than so. ‘Go, I banish you.’”

The ramshackle spirit, so far as it relates to dress, furniture, and the like, may be read in two lights (—at least: everything may be read in twenty thousand lights, if you choose—). It is a form of originality; or a form of stoicism. Originality is another name for sincerity. The stoicism may have its root, or one of its roots, in the sense of the awful, or in sympathy with the masses of human suffering. A man may well be conceived as saying, “I cannot stand a noise of pottering boots around me; but then I should be miserable if I had carpets of Turkey pile about my place when so many of my fellow-creatures are half-starving, so I will have cocoa-nut matting.” You might call such a man a fool, or even go far to prove him one; but you wouldn’t alter him. If he was capable of going that length

in my very, very old days, which I sadly fear was written by one of the Wesleys, and which ran thus :—

“Though ease and plenty, fruits of wealth,
And all the means of life and health,
And sweet convenience please us,
Without a house above my head,
Or feathers to make soft my bed,
My soul could——”

Now, would any sane human being guess what was coming? “My soul could get along somehow, and be pretty comfortable”—is that it? Ah me! it is nothing of the kind. It is this ridiculous climaxed-upside-down :—

“My soul could—*rest in Jesus!*”

Oh, oh! how that line used to make me fume on my bed by night! Good God!—said my thoughts—thou Almighty Maker of heaven and earth! With thy thunder in our ears and thy lightnings in our eyes,—with battle-fields red with blood, and the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain until now,—shall we, in a psalm of so-called praise, sung straight up into thy dreadful face,—shall we make a fuss about our lodgings and our bolsters,—the difference between a flock mattress and a feather-bed; tell thee, thou Un-speakable One, that, *although* we have not feathers to our beds we can rest in the Infinite Word? “Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ; thou art the Everlasting Son of the Father; thou hast taken upon thee to redeem man;” therefore we can do without cushions for a time. Oh, oh!

Thus it was with me, in days when I held some opinions which I do not hold now, and knew, necessarily, much less of this weary world, and all that is to be said for different ways of putting things, and especially for differences of moral dialect. Let all this be considered, and handsomely. There still remains much excuse—surely more than excuse?—for bursts of stoicism in these days—in all days, truly, but especially in these? One reads, without surprise and with a secret pleasure, that there was a certain bareness, or even sordidness, about the appointments of Wordsworth’s home; and it is surely hard to walk open-eyed through life without occasionally exclaiming, “Off, off, vile trappings! we are sophisticated!” In the dead silent midnight, when a beloved life—nay when an unbeloved life—flickers in the socket under our eyes—in the dewy chill of the “awful rose of dawn”—how paltry do the “sophistications” of our daily life appear! You need not trouble yourself to draw the line on the other side,—to imagine a death-bed in a bare stone wash-house, or a cloakless beggar on a hill-top at winter daybreak,—I have

thought of all that, and it is no doubt as miserable to have too little help from art as base to rely too much upon such help. But there still remains plenty of room for the ramshackle spirit; and there is usually sufficient sense of humour in a ramshackle mind to save it from preposterousness. It is only for the sake of the women that some would desire luxury, or the means of luxury; you cannot help wanting to shield a beloved wife or daughter from the winds of heaven and all the uglifying chances of life. But even here there are limits. Baudelaire never looks so contemptible, so disgusting, indeed, as when he prefers the curried and combed belle of the capital to the breezy, inartificial "yonge wyf" of Chaucer.

The question of sincerity or originality remains. To be ramshackle in the true sense is simply to be true. Why should every man's chairs, and tables, and coats, and collars, and neckties, be of the same pattern as his neighbour's? If a new notion in such matters comes quite natural to any one, why shouldn't he work it out? "Affectation," did you say, sir? Pardon me, the affectation is in the vain, lazy imitating of the crowd, not in any one's originality. Till some one does what is not natural to him, he is not affected. "Originality in these matters looks singular, as if you wanted to attract attention." Really now! But what is that to me? If you would all go and be sincere, the whole lot of you would be original too, and then where would be the singularity? There is a young fellow who said to me one day—wasn't it rude of him?—"I believe, dad, if you were to be set down in a splendidly-furnished palace, you would want to turn all the furniture out of doors directly, and furnish all over again with things of your own inventing and making." The irreverent young man is not far from the truth. I should like to keep the fairy palace for my womenkind, but for myself I could *not* stand it. I should prefer to go and spend ten pounds in disused boxes, chumps of wood, hair or flock stuffing, chintzes, and other humble "orts," and make my own furniture. I am a very Robinson Crusoe sort of fellow—no, I couldn't have got on with only man Friday,—I'm a very Swiss Family Robinson sort of fellow—put it that way, please. I have something of Will Wimble in me, too. I never see anything that has been utterly cast off as useless, a bit of wire, a bit of iron, an old box, or what not, without immediately setting my wits to work to see what can be made of it. And, trust me, I have in my time made some smart little conveniences out of dustmen's lumber. I admire the furniture shops, but as museums of curiosities. And yet I have an eye for splendour. Gilding and gorgeous colours are quite in my line. But I like, so to speak, the death's head at the feast, something simple and bare by the side of the ornament. In every department of life, without exception, your true Ramshackle goes in for producing his results out of small and apparently intractable material. Was it not Wollaston who, when some visitor asked to see his laboratory

produced a tea-tray, with a retort or two, a blow-pipe, and so on? Now that's the man for my money. It is the same with books and studies. When I first saw a pair of globes, my thought was not how nice it would be to have a pair like them, but to make planispheres out of cardboard that would work the problems. It is the same with pleasures: I like the cheap and simple ones, and I like to take them in a resolutely ramshackle way. I feel affronted when any one says to me,—“Where are you going to this autumn, Mr. Fieldmouse?” It is a question which implies that I am under a sort of obligation to do as other people do “this autumn.” But why should I? Why shouldn't I stop at home if I choose? Or why shouldn't I take my holiday in my own way? In the same way, all questions, all compliments, all references to my affairs which imply that I live by a code, as other people do, offend me. Some of the things by which acquaintances and even friends have sought to please me have been to me as a red rag to a bull. “What do you intend to do with your son?” is surely a most impertinent and stupid question. I never allowed any one to “do” anything “with” me; I never mean to; and should I not do as I would be done by? The fact is, people seem one and all unable to conceive of any social *outcome*, so to speak, as desirable unless they are after the patterns they have been accustomed to. “I'd rather be a kitten and cry mew” than be thus tied to precedent. Do you think I don't see through this grand conspiracy of humbug? I have just been dipping into the life of a literary man who was “in society.” What a picture! what a sickening story of imitation, vanity, pretence, slander, malice, and scented hugger-mugger! It makes one exclaim, “Oh for a drop of [truth] in a quill, to bathe one's eyes with!” Do you think I would put round my neck for one hour the collar that was worn by any of the fellows who allowed a beast like Rogers to insult them to their faces, as that chartered ruffian used to do in the best society? Poor country mouse that I am, I look down upon the whole concern with scornful rage, except when I laugh at it. Do you think I would put on a swallow-tail, and wear *your* yoke? No, thank you, I will sooner “swing on a gate and eat fat bacon all day long.” I do not like your fine company. How I admire Béranger, keeping himself to himself and steadfastly refusing to be “introduced.” “Dans un grenier qu'on est bien à vingt ans!” yes, and at any age, if Lisette be there, I mean the better Lisette.

But this does not imply that your true Ramshackle is at home in the set Bohemianism of your Quartier Latin or any other rookery. That is just as offensive in its way as the “good form” of society. I protest I know of nothing more conventional, more hollow, more intolerant, more insincere, than Bohemianism so-called in literature. You indifferent to poverty? Ah, ah, do you think I can't see through you, gentlemen of Bohemia? You *despise* poverty in your

hearts. *Your* sort of ramshackle is only a convention that you use partly as a blind, partly as a coat of mail. If you were sincere, you would wear neither the mask nor the armour.

I have scarcely known anything more marked than the gradual growth of the spirit of conventional luxury or genteel propriety in recent literature,—especially in novels. Three-fourths of the charm of some of the most successful novels lies in their pictures of a style of life a little above that of the majority of their readers. There are plenty of pictures of the life of the poor, as matter of humour, as matter of compassion, by way of foil, or as matter of curiosity; but the assumptions of most novels are that the reader is *necessarily* “in society,” and utterly above all hard-working cares. Your young fellow has his club, and lunches on clear turtle soup, cold chicken aux champignons, and St. Peray or Beaune, with a cigar worth a shilling to follow. And when we come to the private life even of the virtuous young curate who retires into so-called simplicity of living with his high-bred wife, I can only say that their idea of poverty or simplicity of living is not mine. Mine would knock them both out of wind and time, and make the novelist's fine words look rather silly. Oh, these things enrage me! Why, years ago, when I was young and soft, at a time when I was forced to mend with paper my own one pair of shoes to keep my feet from the stones, I have been got to subscribe to help a “scholar in distress,—poor man,—such a dreadful case;” and I found out afterwards, that the “scholar” could ride about in a cab and wear fine kid gloves. Mean dandy, how I hated him! By poverty, I mean that of such a life as, to my certain knowledge and personal observation, Mazzini lived,—during part of his time, I hope not for long. That is what I call poverty!

We will not talk much of the Ramshackle tendency to find friends in Alsatia. The most beloved of English humourists said that his intimates had always been “a ragged regiment.” George Sand, speaking for herself through the mouth of one of her characters, says (I quote at random), “C'est parmi les pauvres diables que j'ai toujours trouvé mes amis.” That is good,—pauvres diables is good,—to parody Polonius. I fear the true Ramshackle does not like successful people of the world. For myself, I dislike a fellow with any sort of gloss upon him,—moral, religious, intellectual, or other. I cannot—except by keeping silence, or shunning him—resist the temptation to snub a *millionnaire*; as for moral or social gloss, the following sentences from a recent story will serve my purpose for a concluding turn. The hero of the story is supposed to have got into some discredit, and this is the way in which the novelist goes on about his and his wife's position in “society” :—

“The Leylands' position had been somewhat peculiar. Almost alone among the city people—the higher clerical dignitaries scarcely coming

under that category—they had been freely admitted as of the ‘county set.’ The Homfrays and, perhaps, the Rogersons, just one here and there, enjoyed the privilege with them; but still very few in number were the favoured ones. And now it seemed that by this the outer measure of Leyland’s lapse was to be decreed.

“Leyland’s name was on the books of the very exclusive County Club; and, at quite the first of his return, there went about a steady report that a general meeting of the club was to be called to consider the propriety of removing it therefrom. Leyland would long ago have voluntarily withdrawn his name, had not Mr. Rogerson, Mr. Hulyard, and other friends of his, laid it on him not to do so unless the choice came to be only between that and actual expulsion. This was the state of affairs; the Rogersons, Hulyards—the city, in short—might be depended on not to further visit Leyland’s offence on his head; but the greater county people were slow to give any sign, and the Banbrooks and others of that stamp would surely enough follow them, whatever the event were.”

Now this sort of thing makes me feel as if I should like to hew somebody in pieces before the Lord, as Samuel hewed Agag. And I believe the Lord would approve the action. The true Ramshackle says, “I will not have your Society at the cost of the degradation and falsehood there is in all this.” Society is worth nothing except in proportion to the sincerity and originality of the individuals composing it. In a state of over-civilization, sincerity and originality (by which last is meant simply what must flow out of Naturalness) will be *forced* into Ramshackleness. In the ramshackle world, there may be the happiness and serenity that come of truthfulness. In yours, never, or only by rare chances. I like luxury now and then—

“This jelly’s rich, this malmsey healing,—
Pray dip your whiskers and your tail in;”—

Yes, for a change, fairly giving and taking, so that there shall be no favour shown and no obligation incurred on either side. But it must all come naturally, if at all; and long before

“The cat comes bouncing on the floor”

I shall exclaim—

“Give me again my hollow tree,
My crust of bread and liberty!”

TIMON FIELDMOUSE.

EVENING LONGINGS.

BY BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSSON.

I.

THE Princess sat high in her maiden-bower,
And the boy blew his horn below by the tower :—
*“ Be silent, thou boy, why blowest thou so ?
Thou hinderest my thoughts that afar would go
With the setting sun.”*

II.

The Princess sat high in her maiden-bower,
And the boy no longer blew by the tower :—
*“ Why art thou so silent ? Again thou must blow :
Thou helpest my thoughts that afar would go
With the setting sun.”*

III.

The Princess sat high in her maiden-bower,
And the boy blew again below by the tower ;
And then she wept in the eventide :
“ What do I then want, my God ! ” she sighed :
Then the sun went down.

MEMOIRS OF A CYNIC.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CONTRASTS."

IX.

Mr Scotch friend attended me through the whole of my fever, and until I had reached a state of convalescence, when he was obliged to leave me, and I was placed under the care of a practitioner in the neighbourhood. Health returned to me but slowly, and it was several months before it was fully restored. During the latter portion of my convalescence I began again to consider what profession I should adopt, but could come to no decision on the subject. The legal profession I had already relinquished, why I hardly know, unless it was the keen susceptibility to the ridiculous which has haunted me through the whole of my existence. I now looked on the medical profession with abhorrence; not but that I fully admitted how much we were indebted to its professors, and the many beauties and attractions it possessed. Still, the horrible sight of that dissecting room remained as fresh on my memory as if I were present in it, and I turned from it with loathing and disgust. At last I resolved to wait till I was fully restored to health, and then consult my uncle on the subject,—that is to say, if I could induce him to interest himself in it; and this determination I carried out.

When I called on my uncle after a sojourn of some weeks in the country, he complimented me on my restoration to health.

"Your illness," he continued, "has certainly left its traces behind it. You are far thinner and paler than when I last saw you. Now tell me what I can do for you, as I am rather in a hurry this morning."

As when I entered the house there appeared no signs of either bustle or confusion, but my uncle was calmly seated in his chair reading the newspaper, I naturally suspected his being "in a hurry" was simply an excuse to get rid of me. However, I made no remark, but told him I wished to consult him as to what profession I had better enter.

"I really cannot advise you on the subject," he said rather testily. "You are now old enough to know best what profession or occupation suits your tastes and idiosyncrasies. You had better decide for yourself on the matter, and when I know what your views are I will assist in carrying them out."

"But, uncle," I said somewhat firmly, "I want your opinion. You are my guardian, and I submit I have a right to ask it."

"Well, my dear fellow," he replied, "my opinion is simply this.

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You are not old enough, or at any rate not settled enough, to make up your mind on the subject. Again, I tell you candidly that for either of the learned professions I do not consider your education is sufficient. What say you to the army?"

"I have thought of that, uncle," I said, "but it would be long before I could get a commission, there being so many names down I understand, which would cause considerable delay. Besides, I did not know you had any interest in the service."

"Nor have I," said my uncle, rising from his seat. "Now I tell you what I think you had better do. Wait till you are of age, which will be in two and a half years, and then you can decide for yourself. In the meantime I should advise you to reside with some man of education, with whom you could carry on your studies till you are fitted not only to enter the medical profession, but to take any position in society which may be open to you. By that means you will be better able to choose for yourself, and it will relieve me of all responsibility of deciding for you in your present unsettled state of mind."

I must say I much liked the view my uncle took of the matter, and told him I would adopt it without further hesitation. I asked him with whom I could reside. He hardly knew, he said, unless with a retired Oxford tutor living with his wife at Brighton, with whom he was acquainted. They were in moderate circumstances, and as they had two sons in the army, he thought it very probable they might not object to add a hundred and fifty or two hundred a year to their income.

"If you like the idea," continued my uncle, "I will write to them on the subject."

I readily accepted his offer, and shortly afterwards left the house.

In three days my uncle received a reply from Dr. Morgan, the tutor alluded to, saying he should be happy to receive me into his house, on the understanding that the agreement should end as soon as either was tired of the other's society, or any other circumstance occurred to make a separation advisable. This my uncle accepted on my part, and the next week I was domiciled in Dr. Morgan's house at Brighton. I found the doctor and his wife a very amiable couple, and we agreed well together. The morning was dedicated to study, and in the afternoon each took his own way till we met at dinner. In this manner eighteen months of the time passed on, when the Doctor told me that he and his wife had determined to remove to Paris—would I like to accompany them? I assented without hesitation, and my uncle approving the plan, we started off together for Paris, where the Doctor took apartments in the *Quartier Latin*. Our establishment and method of living, though modest and unassuming, was most comfortable. The doctor was an excellent French scholar, and soon formed a circle of acquaintances among the professors of the different schools in the neighbourhood. I had myself

already received some instruction in the French language, which was still fresh on my memory, but not sufficient to make me a very accomplished French scholar. I now put myself under a professor of the language, and read with him an hour daily, till I could converse fluently.

With the different adventures which happened during my sojourn both at Brighton and Paris I will not detain the reader, especially as I do not think any of them would excite the slightest interest in his mind. I wrote several letters to Burton, but for some time received no answer. At first I thought that he was in ill-humour with me for my neglect of him after my return from India. At the same time I was obliged tacitly to admit that he was hardly of a disposition to retain any ill-feeling against me, especially after the frank expressions of regret I had made in my letters. The mystery was, however, at last explained. About a fortnight before I came of age, I received a letter from my uncle, enclosing one for my tutor, and another to me from Burton, bearing the Calcutta post-mark. In it he informed me that he had heard of my having sent a message to his house shortly after my return from India, he at the time being in the country. He then received an appointment, or writership, as it was then called, in the East India Company's civil service, and a month afterwards left London for Calcutta. He told me he should from time to time correspond with me, and begged me to write and inform him what my present occupation and prospects were, as he should always be interested in my welfare, and sincerely trusted we should some day meet again.

My uncle's letter to me was couched in a style far different from his ordinary curt epistles. In the present instance he was rather diffuse than otherwise, addressing me in terms of great consideration and affection. He reminded me that in about a fortnight's time I should be of age, and advised my immediate return to England, as he should like me to audit the account of the receipts and expenditure of my property placed in his hands, with which he hoped I should acknowledge he had acted the part of a just steward. The letter to my tutor was in my uncle's usual short and concise style. In set phraseology he thanked him for the good service he had rendered me, and enclosed a cheque for the last half year's salary, about to become due, informing him of his wish that I should immediately return home. My leave-taking with my tutor and his wife was friendly in the extreme, and that without any affectation or compliment on either side. I had acquired for them an amount of sincere respect and good feeling I had seldom experienced for any of those under whose care I had hitherto been; and I am fully convinced the feeling I entertained towards them was fully reciprocated.

On arriving in England my uncle received me in a much more friendly manner than usual; so warm was it, in fact, as to cause me considerable surprise. Instead of the few cold abrupt sentences he

was accustomed to address to me, nothing could be more affectionate than his manner. He questioned me as to the progress I had made in my studies, and whether I, personally, was satisfied with the attention and instruction I had received from my tutor.

"I should tell you," he continued, "that he writes me word that in point of education you are sufficiently advanced to commence the study of either law, physic, or divinity; that you are as a classical scholar somewhat above the average of young men leaving the Universities, for, although inferior to many, you are certainly superior to a still greater number. He further says you are a fair mathematician, and, for a young Englishman, a remarkably good French scholar; that your accent, if not perfect, is certainly far more so than ninety-nine Englishmen out of a hundred who profess to be acquainted with the language, while your grammar leaves nothing to be desired. Now all this is very encouraging, and I can want nothing more if you yourself are satisfied."

I told my uncle, modestly, that it was a difficult question for me to decide, as I was a bad judge of my own qualifications. At the same time, I must admit, that if all were not true that my tutor had stated, it was certainly more my own fault than his, for nobody could have been more kind, assiduous, and attentive than he had been to me the whole time I had been with him.

"Well," said my uncle, "that is very satisfactory on both sides. And now let me ask if you have selected the profession you intend to follow?"

"I have not definitely decided," I replied. "I think, however, it will be the law."

"As a solicitor or barrister?" said my uncle.

"As a barrister certainly," I replied.

"Do you intend at once entering an Inn of Court?" he inquired. "And if so, which will you choose?"

"Frankly," I said, "before commencing the study of the law, I should much like to take a holiday, and see a little of the world—that is to say, if you have no objection to offer."

"None at all, my boy," was his reply. "I think the wish perfectly natural. What countries do you particularly desire to visit?"

"Italy especially," I said. "It has always been my wish to visit that country; and now that I have the opportunity I should like to do so. I should also like to see the principal cities of Germany before I return. All French cities, I understand, are like Paris, so I should have little inducement to remain long in France. Altogether, I should wish to be absent some six or seven months, and when I return to my own country I shall set steadily to work at the law. I hope you don't consider the proposition an unsatisfactory one."

"Not at all," said my uncle. "I think, on the contrary, you are perfectly right in the course you propose to pursue. It is exactly

the sort of thing I should have done had I been in your place ; and indeed, had I had thirty years less on my head, it is more than probable I should have offered to accompany you. As it is, I have now little wish to travel, for I feel the infirmities of age rapidly coming on me. To-morrow," he continued, "if you have no objection, I will go through the accounts with you, and if you find them correct, as I trust you will, I shall, the day you come of age, make everything over to you."

Of course I had no objection to offer to the arrangement, and we then separated for the day.

The next morning, when I entered my uncle's sitting-room, I found an ominous number of books, papers, and deeds spread on the table. Possibly my surprise at their number was visible on my countenance, for my uncle said to me,—

"I suppose you are not accustomed to audit accounts."

"I have had no practice whatever," I said to him ; "and, in fact, know nothing about them. However, of this I am certain that examine them as I may I shall not be more fully convinced of your integrity and good management than I am at the present moment."

"Very complimentary of you, my boy, to say so," he replied. "But that's not my way of doing business. We will go, if you please, *seriatim* through the whole, much as it may bore you ; and as the sooner a disagreeable job is begun the sooner it is finished,—which no doubt you have often heard before,—we will set to work at once."

The audit of the accounts lasted several days. The details I will spare the reader, for certainly nothing could be more monotonous than the work. I candidly believe that I had to put my initials to every half crown my uncle had spent during my minority, as certifying it was correct. He had invested, he told me, a good deal of my money in the purchase of annuities. Whenever he had 400*l.* or 500*l.* in hand, he had purchased with it either an annuity or a reversion, and in case he could find none in the market, sooner than allow my money to lie idle, he had transferred to me one of his own at the price he had given for it. There were also several other investments he had made for me, but which I did not understand. The only remark I made during the time was, that I had no idea affairs of the kind could be so complicated ; to which he replied, that the good interest they paid was the result of these complications ; had all been simple, my income would have been far less.

"At the time your property came into my hands," he continued, "the money was in the Funds, and the whole did not exceed 300*l.* a-year, and now your annual income is certainly not less than 500*l.*"

I must admit that this intelligence gave me much satisfaction, as I had no idea I was master of so large a sum. My uncle evidently noticed my pleasurable surprise, and addressing me again, said,—

"Do not imagine I have been ignorant of the suspicion which has always haunted you of my being indifferent to you and your welfare.

You have now before you a sufficient proof of the injustice you have done me. However, let bygones be bygones, and I hope for the future you will think better of me than you have hitherto done."

I hardly knew what reply to make him, when, seeing my embarrassment, he relieved me from it by saying,—

"And now, do you intend taking the management of the property into your own hands?"

"I am afraid, uncle, I should hardly be able to understand how to manage it properly," I replied; "some of the securities seem so complicated; at any rate, until I have made some progress in the law, and am better able to understand their legal nature myself."

"Still," said my uncle, "some one must look after it, especially while you are absent. Who would you like to do so? If you know of no one, I am perfectly willing to do it for you till your return, for, to tell you the truth, I am getting somewhat tired of business."

I told him he would greatly oblige me if he would, and an arrangement was then entered into between us. I was to start on my travels with a hundred pounds in my pocket, and every three months a similar sum was to be forwarded to me to any address I might appoint. The surplus of my income could accumulate till I returned to England, as I should then incur expenses in entering my profession, which that amount would help me to defray. All this met with my perfect approbation, and the day after my coming of age, I started on my journey.

In point of time Italy was then at far greater distance from London than at present. In one respect this was not altogether a loss, for I saw many interesting towns on my way, which are at present missed by the traveller who makes the journey by rail. I think by the diligence it took me four days and three nights to arrive only at Chalons. From that town I descended the river to Lyons, where I took up my abode at a first-class hotel, resolving to remain there for a week. I had not then determined what route I would take into Italy, whether by Mont Cenis, or through Nice to Genoa. I remained for some days in doubt, each way offering great attractions.

On one occasion at the table-d'hôte I entered into conversation with a French gentleman on the subject, who appeared rather a singular character. He was a man of about forty-five or fifty years of age, tall, well-made, though rather common-looking in the face, and fluent in conversation. In his manners there was a singular contrast. With me, as we became better acquainted, there was a frank *bonhomie* about him that pleased me exceedingly. With strangers he was courteous to excess, at least in his manners, which would have been graceful had they not been exaggerated. They struck me as rather the pantomime of an actor on the stage playing the part of a nobleman, than those of a gentleman in ordinary life. Possibly this conclusion was arrived at from his being so well versed in theatrical matters. He knew everything connected with the whole

singers and dancers. Although I had occasionally been to the Opera and some of the theatres when residing in Paris, I knew nothing whatever of their management or politics, and listened, therefore, with considerable attention and amusement to the anecdotes with which my new friend regaled the others at table.

Having discovered that he was going into Italy, I ventured to ask him what route he intended to take.

"By Mont Cenis to Turin," was his reply.

"The reason I inquired," I said, "was because I am undecided what route to take myself."

"Well, then, come with me," he said, "I know the road perfectly well, and most of the towns in the north of Italy, especially Turin, Milan, and Venice, and if I can be of the slightest use to you in showing you the lions, you have but to command me."

I thanked him cordially for his kindness, and the next morning he conducted me to the diligence office, where he took two places in the coupé, and started the same evening for Turin.

X.

THE commencement of my journey from Lyons was somewhat uninteresting. In consequence of the darkness there was nothing to attract my attention to the scenery, I conversed, however, with Mr. Lefevre, my new acquaintance, at considerable length. Although a Frenchman, I found he was well acquainted with the manners and customs of England, and spoke the language with tolerable facility. In one respect he had greatly the advantage of me, for he had (in England at any rate) been in a far higher position in society than myself. He questioned me about our own nobility, and whether I was acquainted with them. He frequently spoke of being intimate with Lord Lowther, the Marquis of Hertford, Lord Sefton, and many others, whom poor I only knew by name, so elevated was the sphere in which he moved above my own. And then again he questioned me as to my own profession. I avoided the subject as much as I possibly could, for I was ashamed to acknowledge the inferiority of the society in which I had hitherto moved, and which I was hardly aware of until that moment. I must say I felt some compunctions of conscience at the meanness of concealing my real position. I told him I had been in the navy (may God forgive me!) and that I had served in the East Indies, but having been seized with a violent illness, I now intended to practise at the bar. He complimented the British Navy very highly, adding that although sickness was a good reason for leaving it, he could hardly excuse any other, so many attractions did it appear to possess in his eyes. The bar had also its attractions, he said; there had been Milord Ellenborough, Milord Eldon who were held in high respect, although personally he knew

but little of them. He then spoke of other members of the aristocracy whom he had met with, especially officers in the Guards, and asked if I were acquainted with any. I remembered that the colonel of the regiment we had taken from St. Helena to Bombay had formerly been in the Guards, and I said I knew him, although, if the strict truth were told, the only conversation that ever passed between us was his telling me to get out of the way, when, in a heavy shower of rain the soldiers were going below, to which he received an uncomplimentary reply. Mr. Lefevre did not know the colonel, nor even remember his name, but his having been in India, I thought, might account for that. Two or three times I tried to recollect the name of some lord to quote against the many with whom he was acquainted, but he quite crushed me, by telling me of a remark once made to him by His Majesty George IV.

Mr. Lefevre now fell asleep, and I attempted to divine what his profession could be. His language and ideas seemed to be those of a gentleman. He was evidently acquainted with many of our aristocracy, and yet the exaggerated gestures he made use of, especially when addressing ladies, threw me in some doubt as to whether he really was the aristocratical person I imagined him to be. At last I fell asleep myself, nor did I awake till the diligence arrived at Pont Beauvoisin, the frontier town of Savoy, where we breakfasted, and our luggage was examined. After a delay of two hours, we again entered the diligence, and continued our journey. In a short time the country became more picturesque, and I, who had never been accustomed to mountain scenery, was perfectly delighted with the prospects around me, and enthusiastic indeed were my expressions concerning it to my companion, who fully sympathised with me. Like most Frenchmen, Mr. Lefevre had evidently artistic tastes, and continually pointed out to me delicious little spots, such as bridges, churches, cascades, &c., which I might have missed in contemplating the majestic scenery around. One time, on approaching La Grande Chambre, my companion was especially enthusiastic when we came to a bridge with a waterfall rushing beneath and a tower at the end.

"What a magnificent effect that would make," he said, "with some peasants crossing the bridge, and a soldier in mediæval breast-plate and helmet, standing with halberd in hand near the tower!"

So vividly did he describe this that I could almost imagine I saw it, and it struck me at the time that the word "scene" he had made use of was very appropriate, as it would have been very beautiful for a theatre.

At St. Jean de Maurienne we dined, and afterwards he proposed we should walk on together and enjoy the scenery while the horses were being harnessed. This we did, and I think I never met with a more agreeable companion than Mr. Lefevre appeared to be that day. All conversation about the aristocracy had been dropped, and the scenery and habits of the people were the sole subjects we talked

the river, and admiring the beauties around. On our return to the inn, we found the horses had not yet been harnessed, and we proposed walking onwards till the diligence should overtake us, which it did at nearly daybreak, when we entered the coupé, and both, thoroughly tired, fell fast asleep. At Modane my eyes were for the first time delighted with some Italian names over the shops, as well as directions in the road in the same language. Here we merely changed horses, and continued our road to Lanslebourg, where we breakfasted. Feeling greatly refreshed by my meal, I proposed to Mr. Lefevre that we should traverse the mountain together, by the foot-path, instead of by the circuitous route the diligence would take, but he pleaded fatigue, saying that his walk of the evening before had somewhat knocked him up, as he was not as young as I was. I regretted the loss of his society, and started off in company with two or three young Frenchmen who were passengers inside the diligence, and arrived at the Hospice before the cumbrous vehicle had overtaken us. Here we dined, and then continued onwards down the Italian side of the mountain. About midnight we arrived at Turin, where Mr. Lefevre and I took up our quarters at the Pension Suisse.

It was late the next day before I arose, so thoroughly fatigued did I feel with my journey. On descending to the coffee-room I was told that Mr. Lefevre, having some business to attend to, had left the hotel, but that he would return to the table-d'hôte at five o'clock. During the day, I occupied myself by roaming about the city, entering churches, noticing shops, as well as the inhabitants. In fact, I was so thoroughly happy in the novelty of the scene around me, that the time passed more rapidly than I had calculated. I now attempted to wend my way back to the hotel, but in consequence of the rectangular manner in which the streets were built, I had some little difficulty in doing so, till at last I met with a gentleman who could speak French, and he kindly directed me. On entering the hotel I found dinner was already begun, but Mr. Lefevre had kept a place for me, beside himself. He proposed that afterwards we should go to the café, and have a cigar and chat together over our coffee. To this I willingly agreed. Having selected a table at a café under the arcade of one of the principal streets, Mr. Lefevre asked me, shortly after we had seated ourselves, how I had occupied my time during the day.

"Simply in strolling about the streets, so as to get a general idea of the city, inspecting churches, and the exterior of public buildings. And highly pleased I was; I had no idea Turin was such a magnificent city. I shall know more about it to-morrow though, as I intend to get a guide, that he may take me to the picture-galleries—for I suppose there are some—and other objects worth seeing."

"Do not trouble yourself to get a guide," said Mr. Lefevre, "for I know Turin well, and shall be happy to go round with you. With the exception of an engagement I have in the afternoon, I shall have

nothing to do all day. On the following day, I shall most probably leave Turin for Milan, and hope I shall be fortunate enough to have you again as my fellow-traveller."

"What makes you leave Turin so early?" I inquired.

"I suspect it will be little use my remaining here," he replied; "I shall be able to transact more business at Milan."

I had long been anxious to know Mr. Lefevre's occupation, for he puzzled me extremely. That he had been in good society was certain, from the familiar terms he appeared to be on with many of our aristocracy. He was a gentleman also of artistic tastes—of that there could be no doubt. Still I hardly knew how to commence the conversation, when fortunately he saved me the trouble.

"I wish," he said, "I were like you, travelling solely for pleasure, and able to go wherever the whim or caprice of the moment dictated. Business, however, must be attended to."

"Are you in business?" I inquired, putting on a tone of surprise, half real, half feigned. "I should hardly have thought it."

He evidently appeared gratified by my remark, and, after making me an exaggerated bow, said,—

"Yes, I am. I hardly know how to term my occupation. It is partly business, partly professional, and partly artistic. In fact," he continued, with a burst of confidence, "I am connected with the opera-house in London, where I was formerly ballet-master; and it was in that occupation that I made the acquaintance of so many of your aristocracy. Afterwards I relinquished that post on Laporte becoming manager of the theatre, and have since acted as travelling agent for him. My employment now is in selecting talented new dancers for the opening of the theatre in the spring. I selected one or two in Paris; but the stars are well known, and are so extortionate in their demands, that I made but few engagements there, and thought I might as well come on to Italy, where I suspect I shall find a good deal of talent, not very well-known, that I shall be able to pick up on favourable terms. And this is the more likely, as I am well acquainted with the north of Italy, having formerly been senior professor of the opera-dancing school at Milan. You may imagine, then, that I not only know a good dancer when I see her, but have my eye on others whom I am certain will be stars in their time."

"Have you concluded any engagements in Turin?" I inquired.

"No," he replied, "nor do I think it likely I shall. There is a dancer at the Carlo Felice, I am told, who has made somewhat of a sensation here, and I shall go to-night to see her. She has been trying to persuade me all the morning to make an engagement at once, as she is anxious to appear in London. I'm too old a hand to do anything of the kind; moreover, I do not think she will suit me."

"Why not?" I inquired.

"Well, from her appearance," he said, "she is evidently a dancer of the *Scuola Walmoden*.

"Walmoden?" I said; "I know that name well, but he was a military officer."

"So he is," said Lefevre. "He is general of the Austrian troops in Milan. A man enormously wealthy, and a most liberal patron of the ballet. Unfortunately he, and some of his associates nearly as influential as himself, all admire dancers of the robust school, estimating strength and weight far more highly than grace. Well, the manager of the theatre, an intimate friend of mine, who of course knows what good dancing is, is greatly vexed at this; but, as I said before, the general is so generous, he does not like to offend him, and the whole of the Austrian party would set themselves against him if he did. Besides that, I heard from the poor fellow I called on this morning that Frasi, the dancer I mentioned, will hardly be likely to please in England or France. However, as I intend seeing her this evening, I shall be able to judge for myself."

"But may not the person who gave you that unfavourable opinion be prejudiced against her?" I said.

"Oh no; of that I am certain," he replied. "I have known him well, poor fellow; in fact, he was a pupil of mine when I was in Milan."

"Why do you say 'poor fellow?'" I inquired.

"Because at present he is in great trouble," he replied. "Indeed when I left his house this morning I felt quite low-spirited. Moreover, I am anxious about him, as he is to make his appearance to-night in a new ballet, and he is almost broken-hearted. I am afraid his *début* will not be a success. The stage, I can assure you," he continued, "is very deceptive. It frequently happens that an individual whose heart is ready to break is obliged, for his bread, to play the buffoon before an audience, who at the time think him the merriest of mortals. It will be somewhat similar with poor Delorge to-night. He is to play the part of zephyr in the ballet of 'Psyche.' You may imagine it will be painful work for him to be skipping about the stage in the light and graceful manner necessary for the part, with a heart as heavy as lead in his breast at the time."

"What misfortune has happened to him?" I asked.

"Delorge, although brought up in Italy, is a countryman of mine," he replied. "He is of no great talent, but a very light dancer. He married a young girl, also a dancer, and they manage between them to make a very respectable living. They are a very affectionate couple, and live very happily together. Their family consisted of three children, the eldest a girl about four years of age, the youngest a baby in arms. They have lately been dancing at one of the small theatres in Milan, the wife's engagement terminating about a month before her husband's. About that time they received the offer of an engagement at Bordeaux; and in case they accepted it, the wife would be obliged to be there at as early a date as possible, but the husband would not be required till six weeks later. They

did not like the idea of parting from each other even for so short a time ; but being very poor, and their engagement in Milan, from the failure of the manager, having been most unprofitable, they accepted the offer.

"The wife started off, taking with her hardly sufficient funds for her journey ; and the husband was to follow as soon as his engagement terminated, and he had received what little money might be saved from the amount the manager owed him. Shortly after his wife's departure the cholera broke out in Milan, the theatre, after an unsuccessful attempt on the part of the manager to keep it open, closed, and the poor fellow lost the whole of the money owing to him. This misfortune was the more terrible to him as it rendered it exceedingly difficult for him to join his wife. Prudence in our profession is seldom carried to any great length, and Delorge is by no means an exception to the general rule. Thanks, however, to the assistance he received from some of his more fortunate professional brethren, and the sale of a portion of his wardrobe, he at last had sufficient money to commence his journey, when premonitory symptoms of cholera appeared in one of his children. Two days later the eldest girl was a corpse, and the second child was attacked by the disease, which also terminated fatally. The poor fellow was now almost beside himself with sorrow ; but his cup of misery was not yet full. He had received a letter from his wife, urging him to join her with as little delay as possible, not only on her own account, but that his engagement would be jeopardised should he longer stay away.

"As Delorge was now penniless, he accepted an engagement for a week in Turin, by which he would be in possession of sufficient funds for his journey ; but on the moment of starting, another terrible anxiety presented itself. The infant, which had been hastily weaned to allow its mother to proceed on her journey, now began to show symptoms of sinking. Its constitution, never strong, could not bear the shock the absence of its mother and its natural food occasioned. Still he had no help for it. Turin was on his way, so securing a place in a vetturino, he started off, taking the child with him. It takes two days to perform the journey from Milan here, and although the other passengers showed him every consideration, the infant suffered greatly from fatigue. On arriving at Turin he obtained the opinion of the doctor of the theatre respecting his child's health, and he, I suspect, only told him part of the truth. He said there was still a probability, though a remote one, of the child living ; all depended on its being able to take nourishment. Somewhat consoled at hearing this, he attempted by all the means in his power to get the child to swallow food ; but he tells me, as yet with very little success. I have not the slightest doubt in my mind the child will not live till morning. Poor Delorge is so anxious about it he will allow no one to feed it but himself ; and there he sits in his room, the gourd in his hand, the baby on his knee, trying to attract its

down his face. Do you see what strange anomalies there are in our profession, and how the pathetic and the ludicrous often commingle in a very singular manner."

"You intend going to the theatre to-night, do you not?" I inquired. "I should like much to accompany you."

"It will give me great pleasure if you will," said Mr. Lefevre. "Nay more, after the first act of the opera is over, in which the new dancer I wish to see has a *pas-seule* before the ballet, I will, if you like, take you behind the scenes, and introduce you to a few celebrities in the place."

It would have been impossible for Mr. Lefevre to have made me an offer which I could have liked better. The stage had always great fascination for me, and I was then as completely delighted with theatrical representations as I was when a boy. I seemed to have forgotten the manner in which my illusions were then broken, and the stage, with all its absurdities, had for me the realism I considered it possessed. Often had I wished to visit behind the scenes, but having hitherto had few theatrical acquaintances, in fact, none, beyond the stage carpenter, by whom my respect for the talents and fidelity of the Dog of Montargis had been so rudely crushed,—I had never had the opportunity. Now, however, I should be able to see all those in whom I was so interested face to face, and converse with them *in propria persona*, that is to say, with those who could converse in French, for I did not then know three words of Italian.

The time at last came for us to repair to the theatre, and Lefevre, who had received a box in the morning from the manager, took me to it, and I impatiently awaited the rising of the curtain, amusing myself the while by examining the house and its details. It was splendid certainly; but there was a dull, worn look about it which deprived it of a great deal of its beauty. Again, the whole of the theatre being composed of private boxes, gave it a depressing effect, which was still further increased by the scanty light shed by the chandelier in the centre.

At length the opera began. It was neither good nor bad, and at this moment I forget the subject, so little impression did it make on me, although naturally fond of music. Possibly this might have been occasioned by Lefevre chatting with me volubly the while, giving me different details of the actors and actresses as they came on the stage, as well as pointing out to me different celebrities in the body of the house. At length the time arrived for the *pas-seule*, and Lefevre was now all attention, in fact, during the whole of the dance he did not utter one word, his eyes being critically fixed on the dancer the while. When she had concluded, he said,—

"She will not do. Her knees are bad, and she bends them in the *entrechats*. Didn't you notice how clumsily she did them?"

I told him I was but a poor judge of subjects of the kind, though she by no means appeared to me an expert dancer. My reply was truthful enough; at the same time I could not conceal from myself that I thought her a very pretty girl. Moreover, she was favourably received by the audience, though I could perceive no small portion of the applause given her was from a number of young men, evidently her ardent admirers, who occupied some front rows in the pit.

The first act over, Lefevre proposed that we should leave the theatre, and enjoy the fresh air for a few minutes, as the house was intensely hot. I submitted to him whether he did not think it possible the ballet might commence during our absence.

"No fear of that," he replied. "They are far longer here between the different pieces than in France or England. Moreover Frasi will have to change her dress for the ballet, and that, with her, will take no little time, as she is by no means inclined to hurry herself. Let us sit down at the café here and have an ice. Warning will be given us before the curtain is drawn up by a lad sent round with a bell, as a notice for the audience to enter the house."

The ices were now brought, and while we were eating them I asked Lefevre whether he definitely objected to Frasi.

"Not definitely," he replied. "But I think she will not do. As a second-rate dancer she might be worth engaging, as there are some good points about her. To take her at her own valuation would be impossible, as she thinks herself a Montessu, and expects to be paid at the same rate. However, we will go behind presently, and then I can have a little conversation with her on the subject, and see what I can make of her."

A boy presently left the theatre, ringing a bell, and Lefevre proposed that we should return to it, which we did by the stage-door at the back of the house. I have already mentioned that the entrance in front of the house as well as the interior was gloomy; but they were light as day when compared with the entrance at the stage-door. Certainly no manager in Europe could economise oil to a greater extent than it appeared to be in this theatre. So dark was it that Lefevre, who appeared to know the locality perfectly, was obliged to lead me by the hand through many tortuous passages till we reached the wings. These also were in some obscurity, as the oil lamps were all turned upon the stage, which, however, was brilliant enough.

At the moment of our entering, the stage was being cleared for the ballet of "Psyche," the music by Stiebelt, which had lately been revived in Paris. It was singular to notice the respect that many of the dancers paid to Lefevre; while others tried to attract his notice in every possible manner. Presently Frasi, dressed for the part of Psyche, joined the group, and pushed her way forward till she had reached Lefevre, with whom she immediately entered into conversation. She had evidently left her dressing-room in great haste, for a dirty, shabby-looking woman followed her, with needle and thread in

made on Lefevre. What she said I did not, of course, understand ; but she was evidently speaking to him about the engagement. Presently she said something in a low tone of voice, glancing at me at the time, and I, not wishing to appear indiscreet, left them, and proceeded towards a group of coryphées who had collected round something near the stage. I found the object was a male dancer, whom I judged, from his dress of a white muslin tunic, with absurd little emerald-coloured wings on his back, must have been Delorge, who was to take the part of Zephyr. As he sat there he presented altogether a mixture of the painful and the grotesque. On his knee was a sickly child, its probable duration of life evidently not exceeding a few hours, whom he was feeding—or rather trying to feed—with milk from a small gourd he held in his hand, fastened over the thin end with a piece of wash-leather. This he attempted to place in the infant's month, who turned away its head with a faint sickly cry of annoyance. He endeavoured to soothe it with some endearing motherly expressions, but his attempts were vain. He seemed dreadfully distressed at his ill-success, and a tear gathered in the poor fellow's eye and fell, leaving its trace in the stage paint on his cheek.

Suddenly a bell rang, and the orchestra commenced playing the overture. That over, the curtain drew up, and the air of Zephyr, by Stiebelt (so well known in old music books), was played as the cue for Delorge to go on the stage. The poor fellow, occupied with his own thoughts, paid no attention to it, till one of the by-standers recalled him to his senses. He started up hurriedly, and looked wildly around him for a moment. Then placing the infant in the arms of one of the dancing girls who stood near him, he, with a tremendous bound, leaped upon the stage. His appearance was greeted with a loud burst of applause. He could not stop his movements, however, to acknowledge the compliment, but contented himself with attempting to assume an expression of surprise and delight, which made his face to those near him almost ghastly. But another circumstance was noticeable, which increased immensely the contrast between the gay and the painful. In his hurry to go on the stage, Delorge had forgotten to place the gourd also in the custody of some one, and in consequence he was obliged to hold it in his hand the whole time of his dance. It was curious to watch in his different evolutions the tact he used to hide the gourd from the audience, so that in each turn he made, while throwing his arms about, the back of his hand should always be presented to them. But even this solicitude could not keep him from frequently casting his eyes towards the spot where his child was surrounded by the ballet girls. Although he could not see it, its low faint cry reached him, and it evidently went to his heart, for as soon as the dance was over he rushed from the stage,

regardless of applause from the audience which called him forward. Lefevre reminded him how impolitic it would be to offend them, and recognizing the justice of the remark, he went on the stage to make his bow. I never saw the expression on a human being's face change as rapidly and abruptly as his did at the time. A look of violent rage first betrayed itself at the idea of again going forward, which changed to a placid, grateful smile when before the audience, and was succeeded by one of heartfelt sorrow as he left the stage and caught sight of the infant, the whole not occupying more than a few seconds.

The infant was again placed in his arms, and Frasi came forward, listening to the music for the moment when she was to dart upon the stage. In the interim she looked down at Delorge, and said something encouraging to him which I did not understand, but to which he shook his head mournfully as if she were in error. Then spreading out her skirts, with the assistance of her dresser, and casting another look at poor Zephyr, she crossed herself reverentially, and uttering some short imploration to the Virgin, generally used by dancers in those days, to obtain applause, mixed most probably on the present occasion with an unuttered prayer for the soul of the child so soon to depart, she placed the dancer's smile on her countenance, and went on the stage.

Two or three times afterwards had Delorge to make his appearance during the ballet, and of course had to give up his child to the custody of one of the girls, but not again did he forget to deliver up the gourd with it. To say the truth, the scene was so painful to me that, much as I had been interested in the stage and its surroundings, I felt so sick at heart that I left Lefevre and went round to my box in front of the house. When seated there, watching the termination of the ballet, and the gyrations of poor Delorge, with the set smile on his countenance, the idea struck me more forcibly than ever of the hollowness of the stage. At the same time, I now felt an interest in it which I did not possess before. The idea of the sublime and the ridiculous, the gay and the painful, selfishness and charity, all which, during my short visit behind the scenes, I had witnessed, promised me abundant source of amusement and study. I determined, therefore, to become better acquainted with the stage, and that determination I carried out to the full. It has always been to me a source of unfailing amusement and interest, which, even now, as an old man, is not one jot less than at the time I witnessed the performance of the "Dog of Montargis ; or, the Forest of Bondy," and beheld with reverence and respect the crabbed, ill-tempered old woman I, when eight years of age, used to admire when playing the benevolent and majestic Queen at the Surrey Theatre.

THE ODD TEN MINUTES.

No. II.

TESTS OF GREATNESS.

IF all the untested generalisations and connotations that are accepted in the world were brought to book, and, when found wanting, ordered to execution, there would be much slaughter. Only platoon firing on a large scale would meet the case. When we use the words, "a great man," have we any definite idea of what we mean? Here, I foresee somebody will make answer, "No, not a definite idea; but a workable one." Now, fine words are all very well, but not if they help us to err and go astray like lost sheep, when we might do better.

I remember reading that all great men are great eaters. Does anybody believe this? Yet there is a share of sense in it. In human beings who do much work, there must be great vital force; the furnace must burn well; and it seems to follow that it must take in plenty of fuel. But after all, that does *not* follow; for it is conceivable that one furnace might have greater power than another of extracting force from the same amount of fuel. One has seen it contended that the mental power of a woman is equal to a man's, because the woman's intellect has less driving power, and works with less waste. As I sat and heard this from a lady lecturer once, I had in my mind a picture which would not have pleased her much—ladies are so serious. It was a picture of Leech's in *Punch*. The train was on the point of starting; all the passengers but two had taken their places; the wife was beckoning madly from her seat in the carriage; the guards and the husband were frantic; but nothing would induce the tall, stout nurse, baby in arms, to hurry to her place. She *would* give the enraged husband a leisurely explanation of the necessity she had felt under of looking after the plate, &c., &c., &c. It is certainly true that (loveable) women are deficient in "driving force;" and long may they keep so, thought I.

However, that is a digression. It has been contended that the difference between genius and ordinary faculty consists in the greater or less power of assimilating certain kinds of nutriment. This looks as if the gulf between producing beef tea and producing an Aristotle could not be very great. (Here the scientific expert turneth up his nose, snorteth, saith: "This sciolist is ill-read; knoweth not of Biology; is in the gall of ante-Evolutional bitterness and the bond of pre-Darwinian iniquity.")

But then, every man of genius is not a great man. I have read, again, that every great man is, by the definition, in harmony with the spirit of the age. But *why* is he? And how are we to know the spirit of the age? What sort of man was Spinoza, and what sort of spirit of the age was he in harmony with? I could easily, but decline at present for good reasons, make out a very puzzling list for you. And even when you had very plausibly made out your spirit of the age and your harmony of your great man with it, I should say, All this is an *ex post facto* hash of uncertainties. I repeat the question, What *is* the spirit of the age? You may think you have got it; and yet all the while some trifle is happening round the corner which will flood the world with quite another "spirit," before the hands have been round the clock. The stone that the builders rejected—and so forth. But I did not mean to be so serious. I was thinking, when I wrote "round the corner," of Sam Weller and Mary: "Ah, my dear, if you know'd who was here, you'd change your note; as the hawk observed to hisself with a cheerful laugh, ven he heerd the nightingale a singin' round a corner," (I have not read *Pickwick* since the Deluge, and daresay that is wrong). But in one thing I am quite serious,—there is always something waiting round a corner with a cheerful laugh; all is influx and efflux; and to say that such a man is great, partly because he is in harmony with the spirit of the age, is only giving one a nut to crack which, ten to one, when cracked is empty.

The first time I ever asked myself what a great man is, was, I remember, when I read Channing on Napoleon Bonaparte. He says something like this: "It would be idle to inquire whether he was great or not; the man who, in a few years, has changed the face of Europe has taken out of our hands the question whether he shall be called great." Here, then, was a first glimmer of guidance. We call a man great primarily with reference to the force he shows. But there is necessarily great uncertainty in all such classifications. It is possible, nay, arguable, that Watts's Divine and Moral Songs have had as much effect on the world as Napoleon's victories, but I hope no one would call Watts a great man.

And I also hope no one will take this playful chatter of mine for more than it is meant for.

CHARLES LAMB'S LEISURE.

It is good for us to know and admire the beautiful heroism of Lamb's life; but it is also good to recognize openly that he partly broke down under the strain of the situation. His elder and more selfish brother John wanted to put poor Mary in a madhouse; and it is conceivable (I do not say probable) that this might have been better for her, and for Lamb too, if he would have acquiesced in it. But, if

for us all.

But what an awful strain there must have been upon him all those years! And he not only kept, unto the end, the vow he made in Mary's behalf, he kept the vow he made concerning his own name—"I will not shame thee, gentle name!"—that is, he kept it with an approach to complete fidelity. He sometimes frets and is miserable,—very; and no wonder. Once, at least, he says he thinks it would be better if Mary were dead; and it was a shockingly plausible thing to say; *from the first* there are lines of irritability—and worse—about Lamb's mouth, and he could bite, upon occasion. A very few of his witticisms were cruel. But it is not until quite late in his mournful life that we arrive at the lesson that we must not expect too much of each other.

Considering how he had longed for leisure, considering his rapture when set free, yet in the full vigour of maturity and producing-power so far as dates show; considering his mental resources; considering his friendships, and what men his friends were;—the picture his own words give one of his manner of life in his later days is surely one of the most mournful ever drawn. We must, indeed, remember that there was a suspicion of madness in him, too; and that he could not (as he says) sit down and think for long together. This is much, but more must be laid to the fact that he had been over-worked and had borne so much. His leisure came too late. I do not wish to imitate the man who wrote an essay on "What Lady Macbeth might have been had her Energies been properly Directed;" and it is probable that there was some want of self-directing power in Lamb. But that a scholar, a humourist, a poet, an art-critic, a good man rich in choice friends, should find his leisure a burden, should even misemploy it,—seems incredible (in spite of perhaps other examples of the kind). When I call Lamb a scholar, I do it knowing very well that his attainments were limited. But, for all that, he was a scholar; his range of knowledge was evidently great (in spite of Coleridge's rude jest and his own banter). There was no door of acquisition shut upon him, and he was really a thinker. Leigh Hunt might well say his head was worthy of Aristotle or Bacon; and Mr. Forster may well add that there is scarcely a sentence of his which cannot be proved to be crammed with thought. And yet he goes and dies of the miserables, pining for a return to his Leadenhall Street bondage, and getting up the steam on "Dutch courage" a great deal too often.

It is a spectacle to humble us. The moral present to my mind is that we make woeful mistakes by habitually thinking of a man as made of soul and body in such a way that the soul has unlimited

power over the other, if he only *wills* it so. But I shall get at loggerheads with the Right and the Left, and the Left Centre, and the Right Centre, and the whole lot, if I pursue *that* in this vein.

AND COLERIDGE THEN ?

I THINK I overhear some one saying, "And how about Coleridge? Don't you wonder even more at *him*?" Well, no, I can't say I do. He had not Lamb's moral fibre; he had not proved his strength as Lamb had proved his. And, on the whole, Coleridge has always struck me as a man of genius who pretty well fulfilled the indications of his own nature. Not so with Lamb. I think if you had at any time put before me Coleridge's works, and also a few anecdotes of him, *accompanied by a portrait*, I should have said, "Very good, what did you expect? This prose is just what you might have looked for. And these incoherent self-reproaches, also. And 'Christabel' is all the better unfinished. And the refuge at Highgate was just what Coleridge wanted, and just what the Gillmans were, you may say, bound to offer." Lamb's story impresses one very differently. And sometimes one cannot help feeling, for a moment, as if his friends must have been wanting to him. He needed no Gillmans to clothe and feed him, and no Southey's to look after his belongings. But could nothing have been done to occupy him and draw him out? However, we must not forget how difficult it must have been to visit at a house in which there was a mad woman—the uncertainties and perplexities that this must have thrown over all frank intercourse with the world without.

MATTHEW BROWNE.

LORD BYRON AND HIS TIMES.

"Sorrow seems half of his immortality."—*Cain*.

BYRON is not an exhausted subject. For he, though one of our greatest poets, has of late years been under-estimated and neglected in England—a new school of poetry being in the ascendant, mainly an outgrowth from Keats, Wordsworth, Shelley, and foreign schools, Italian or French. It is remarkable that, whereas on the Continent neither of these last-named poets (except in some small degree Shelley) has to any extent influenced literature, while Byron has influenced it more than any other English poet except Shakspeare and Pope, among his own Anglo-Saxon people the reverse is true; for I know not any poet of note, English or American, unless it be Edgar Poe, Bulwer, and a quite recent but genuine poet of California, Mr. Miller, whom we may affiliate upon Byron; and these very partially. Of course he has had scores of imitators; but imitators, however popular for a moment, soon perish. I speak of original poets who are generally nurtured in some degree upon their predecessors. Respecting Byron's influence on continental literature, Dr. Karl Elze's life of him* shows interesting research. Hugo, Heine, de Musset, Béranger, and Lamartine, occur at once as instances; but the Slavonic races also have heard his fiery tones and responded in their poetry. Thus "the Russian poet Puschkin has stirred the ardent youth of Russia with a lyre attuned to that of Byron, and the most important Spanish poet of recent times has been termed the Spanish Byron." In England, however, such Byronic growths as may be traced in literature (and there are few) have taken their nourishment from the more morbid elements in him. Notwithstanding his inordinately inorganic form, Mr. Dobell is a very genuine poet; but in the spasmodic school to which he belongs, a strange, half-tragic, half-grotesque figure seems always painfully prominent—the poet namely—at once admiring and bemoaning himself, torn asunder by his own passions, and loudly arraigning his Maker, as it were in the market-place, for making him so very disagreeable a person both to himself and to his neighbours.

There is little response in our literature, as there is in that of the Continent, to what is strongest and highest in Byron. He is pre-eminently the poet of revolution, and of what the Germans call "world-sorrow." But England is not a congenial home of revolution. There is implied in the Puritanism and Protestantism which dominated

* Life of Lord Byron. By Karl Elze. John Murray. 1872.

our two English rebellions a most conservative and law-abiding principle—one of obedience to authority. If the principle of private judgment as vindicated by Luther, Wyclif, Cranmer, and the Reformers, opened the door to what is now termed Rationalism, yet between them and the later rationalists there is a great gulf fixed;—the former only shifted and restored the fulcrum of that lever which they held to have been displaced by human corruption, the lever of Supernatural authority—the latter threw away that lever altogether. In England, religion and the political constitution have been slowly and gradually liberalized; the Bible, however, remained (how far may we say, remains?) the fulcrum of authority, the rule of faith and conduct. In France, in Italy, in Spain, both religious and political reforms have met with less success, have been crushed in the bud; hence the tendency is to violent explosions in extremes of theory and practice, to what we moderns mean by the principle of revolution.

With respect to *Welt-Schmerz*, Goethe affirms that Byron introduced it into literature; but I think that is saying too much. Rousseau rather is the father of it, though I am not sure we should not say Shakespeare in "Hamlet." Goethe himself in "Werther" and in "Faust" may likewise be regarded as one main source of the same spirit; Jean Paul also, and other contemporaries of Goethe. But there has been so much of it since Byron, in France and Germany, that it is difficult now to recognise Byron as a grand fountain of it in our more recent English literature. It is in Shelley, in Novalis, Obermann, Heine, Musset, Balzac, George Sand. In Carlyle, Clough, Matt. Arnold, and Tennyson's "In Memoriam," how different a semblance it wears! In these it is a reflecting, brooding, recluse-like sorrow, serene Wordsworth even traceable therein; we behold the half-bewildering, half-apocalyptic suggestions of an ever-developing natural science seething in strange speculations! Access since Byron has also been attained to the great systematic metaphysicians of Germany, whose thought has penetrated, at least by infiltration through their German and French popularizers, to the stolid practical but rather obtuse English mind,—these metaphysicians, together with Schiller, Goethe, and the German critics, constituting the Teutonic element in that vast intellectual and moral upheaval, which characterized the opening of the grand European era we name Revolutionary; and as German ideas permeated France and England, so, thank Heaven! are French and English principles of social change now conquering Germany, in spite of Bismarcks, Moltkes, and Emperor Williams. Moreover Orientalists have made known to us the mighty religious philosophies of the East. Carlyle is a great prophet of *welt-schmerz* and of individualism too, though he is most severe on Byron because of his lamentations. Yet Mr. Morley, with some reason, calls Carlyle "Byron with shaggy breast." Certainly in Carlyle one feels less of insatiable vanity, less of hunger

the gratitude of any generous pupil must be unfailing. But his stern and solitary Stoic pride has passed now, one fears, into something of crabbed harshness. He has ever held up to us Goethe as the great modern hero in life and in literature. While of Byron, hear what he says :—" A strong man of recent time fights little for any good cause anywhere, works weakly as an English lord, weakly delivers himself from such working, with weak despondency endures the cackling of plucked geese at St. James', and sitting in sunny Italy in his coach and four, writes over many reams of paper the following sentence with variations, 'Saw ever the world one greater or unhappier?' This was a sham strong man."

Now if Byron's actual career be remembered, and we shall presently remind our readers of it, this will seem nothing but a marvellous and most unwarranted caricature. Yet even when Byron is most absorbed in his own sorrow—and very surely he is not always so absorbed—he is unconsciously and by force of genius the mouth-piece and representative of those who [like our own selves, how often in this epoch of weary individualism !] feel the weight and burden of all this unintelligible world pressing upon their heart. He is the Human Soul with infinite longings that nothing finite can satisfy, yet finding nought that it can recognise as indeed infinite to rest upon. Cease your vain whinings after enjoyment! says Carlyle; if you suffer, like the Spartan boy conceal the ravening agony and say nothing. What right hast thou to happiness, even to being? Possess thy soul in patience and work! This is noble and well; so far as it goes better than Byron. But this in Carlyle rests on a faith, such a faith as Byron had not. And there are perhaps objections to this too stoical repudiation of happiness. May it not tend to some undue acquiescence in the unhappiness of others? May it not tend to repress that "enthusiasm of humanity," which must at least include the desire of imparting happiness to all. It at any rate rather suggests fox and grapes. This ascetic independence of human sympathy and approbation, as of all innumerable nature-provided *external* springs of enjoyment, this haughty assiduous self-culture, may possibly result in a certain lonely callousness of heart ungladdened and ungraced with tenderly humane sensibilities, in a certain stern self-satisfaction which may not really be more noble than the self-loathing of a Manfred. "Thus I trample on the pride of Plato," said Diogenes, treading on the philosopher's purple robe. "With greater pride, Diogenes," replied the sage.

In Carlyle surely the bitter wailings over man's present condition are even deeper than Byron's—and fully as misanthropic—while he hardly manifests the same generous ardour of sympathy toward the efforts of mankind, however ineffectual, to free themselves

from oppression, and enter upon the heritage of their manhood. Byron was a miserable man amongst miserable men, but their helpful brother in the blind groping toward light. This latter, indeed, Carlyle strives and means to be; and he is miserable enough; but perhaps he too much ignores the common and irrepressible instincts of human nature, calling man to impossible heights of renunciation and self-centred contentment, refusing to aid them in attaining humbler human happiness more within their reach. A school-master's rod for the foolish, naughty masses of men! Surely the moral *dragonnades* of his fierce invectives against the criminal classes (in "Latter-Day Pamphlets") are almost inhuman in their indiscriminating pitilessness—further from Christ's "God be merciful to me, a sinner," than anything of Byron's. Yet one differs unwillingly from one's teacher and superior. Carlyle seems to me altogether a more admirable hero than his later model Frederick, the great drill-sergeant. But happiness is, though not the *whole* of our being's end and aim, yet an integral part of it. What Byron lacked was a sane mind in a sane body. He thirsted unduly after pure enjoyment, without that necessary shadow of pain which must accompany it; and he did not, as Carlyle justly points out, face that pain so courageously as he should have done; yet a more iron nature must allow for the acute sensibilities of such a man; he was one nerve for pleasure or for pain to travel over,—and surely such a nature is not without its rare uses in the world. Besides, albeit too ostentatiously and with too much weeping, he *did* defy and endure his anguish after all, as do his heroes; he, in addition, silencing it altogether at the last—in order to set right the time "out of joint" (which necessity, laid on him by Duty, this contemplative man, like Hamlet, must have felt to be "a cursed spite"), actually laying down the pen and taking up the sword—nay more than the sword, for which he had some love, the prosaic entanglement of practical politics also, for which he had none, and showing therein admirable good sense. I do not find that Goethe, for instance, had the smallest inclination to do anything of the sort,—showed any keen interest even in the piteous struggles of his fellow-men—that he left to his great rival Schiller, to Fichte, and Theodor Körner; though indeed Goethe, in his most immortal work, "*Faust*," as in "*Werther*," and his best drama "*Goetz*," is not the serene Olympian, the pure artist, which is apparently what Mr. Carlyle admires in him. But Byron knew not moderation or self-restraint; he was so spiritually infirm as to gratify every whim; thus came satiety and remorse. Mazzini, the illustrious Duty-loving apostle of these latter days, whose life was one long sacrifice for human welfare, and who yet never pandered for his own advantage to popular errors, takes a far juster view of Byron, and in spite of all his faults reverences in him not only the great poet, but the noble man. Of his characters, Mazzini says, "They are gifted with ability they know not

how to use ; with a power and energy they know not how to apply ; with a life whose purpose and aim they comprehend not. *They are alone*, this is the secret of their wretchedness and impotence. They thirst for good, but cannot achieve it ; for they have no mission, no belief, no comprehension of the world around them. They have never realised the conception of *humanity* ; the continuity of labour that unites all the generations into one whole ; the common end and aim only to be realised by the common effort. The emptiness of the life and death of solitary individuality has never been so powerfully and efficaciously summed up as in the pages of Byron. His intuition of the death of a form of society, men call wounded self-love ; his sorrow for *all* is misinterpreted as cowardly egotism. Whilst Byron withered and suffered under a sense of the wrong and evil around him, Goethe attained the calm—I cannot say of victory—but of indifference. ‘Religion and politics,’ said he, ‘are a troubled element for art. I have always kept myself aloof from them as much as possible.’ The day will come when democracy will remember what it owes to Byron. I know no more beautiful symbol of the future destiny and mission of Art than the death of Byron in Greece. The holy alliance of poetry with the cause of the people—the union, still so rare, of thought and action—the grand solidarity of all nations in the conquest of the rights ordained by God for all his children—all that is now the religion and the hope of the party of progress in Europe, is gloriously typified in this image.”

Indirectly Kepler, Galileo, Descartes, Newton, Locke, and Bacon ; more directly, Hobbes, Spinoza, and Pope ; later still, Helvetius, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau, and the Encyclopædists, had, as spokesmen of their time, rudely shaken the venerable but decrepit fabrics of religion and society—because in truth the Divine Life once in them was no longer there, was secretly creating for itself newer and sounder habitations. The structure was unsound at heart, eaten to the core, though it still might stand externally sound and fair. Religion took the side of evil, the side of the powerful oppressor, of the tyrant ; she imposed dogmas moreover upon men, that daily grew more incredible with the progress of discovery, and hoped still to stunt the intellect and conscience of mankind with bands and swaddling-clothes belonging to their infancy. Europe felt the shock of revolution and trembled. Nevertheless, when the allied nations had overthrown the mighty dictator, Napoleon,—that Titan sprung from the loins of revolution, governing in the name of the people, and at least ostensibly in their interest, disposing of Europe in his own anarchic fashion, with little regard to the consecrated pretensions of ancient priests or ancient kings,—there came a reaction, and lo ! the old orthodox spirit returned with seven others more oppressive than itself. “The Holy Alliance considered it not unholy to leave unfulfilled the promise given to nations in the hour of trial,

to beat down by force of arms their right to self-government, which had been bought at the price of much precious blood, and to treat nations at their congresses like herds of cattle." When the Holy Alliance (says Gervinus) believed that it had arrested for ever the aberrations of the spirit of revolution by the subjugation of France, then this English poet knit again the thread, which a million of soldiers had been called forth to sever for ever. The state of the world was one great dissonance, and Byron, who possessed the special organ of its expression, became the poet of this crisis. That he had sacrificed his life for Greece and freedom, surrounded his name with a halo of glory: this martyr-death became an inspiring theme for poetry and passion. And what, after all, if in this and other acts of his life, there was some imaginative taste for artistic *effect*, some desire, it may be, of applause? Is that so very shocking? Human motives are mixed, and by mixed motives human progress is secured. There *are* aspects of human affairs other than the moral.

Byron stood prominently before mankind, a man of high social position, and even with aristocratic proclivities—in this too meeting his time half-way, for the reformers of the Continent were often aristocratic like himself—with romantic and fascinating personality, a man of the world as well as a cosmopolitan poet, obtruding his defiant revolt and uncompromising individuality no less in life than in poetry. An exile from England, he openly assisted the Carbonari of Italy, and in every way proved himself the friend of human freedom all over the world. No wonder that the liberal youth of the Continent were stirred profoundly by his words and example. Italy and Greece are free. But how disappointing often were the results of youthful enthusiasm and aspirations! More fruit was expected from sweeping political changes than could in the slow growth of human history possibly result—even if the changes themselves were found practicable or beneficial. Healthy desire for self-government was repressed under tyrannical rulers where these retained or regained the power, and here intelligent youth was forced to champ the bit, resorting perforce to more animal, selfish, and sordid outlets of activity. The boundless spirit of discontent let loose over the world caused more unhappiness than the former submissive acquiescence in any lot, however degraded. The old world was passing from under men's feet—but where was the promised land? Shouting "freedom," men but "wore the name engraven on a heavier chain. The sensual and the dark rebel in vain."

The right of private judgment, as vindicated by the Renaissance and Reformation, was pushed to such an extreme, that not so much the higher individual with his own special, rational ideal, in essential harmony with all others, was enthroned, but rather the capricious anti-social disorganizing individual—which exaggeration by inevitable reaction leads to the riveting of new dogmatic chains upon the

limbs of unemancipated humanity, and so to renewed triumph of corrupt hierarchies. In proportion to a man's enlargement of intellect and intensity of sympathy was his sorrow; man was—nay, still is—a discord and burden to himself—that is, if he be more than a mere animal, or selfish member of the privileged classes—if his mind march in harmony with the progress of the “world-spirit.” So far as in Byron's day the general conclusions of modern science, born in the 15th and 16th centuries, shone for all, they only served to flicker dim distrust from afar upon time-honoured convictions and serviceable beliefs: it is only recently that Science, descending from her altitudes above the crowd, begins to hold forth a promise of reconciliation with ancient indestructible Faith. But for Byron all is still doubt, negation, and despair. Nor can he whistle, and chatter, and grin more or less complacently and comfortably over the human welter like a Voltaire or a Diderot: in fact the storm has burst since then; one can no longer nestle in old cosy nooks of courts that one is helping to shake about the ears of one's children; “After us, the deluge,” but the deluge has come. “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,” will not quite satisfy Rousseau and Byron.

Yet negation and despair have never in any general sense been so unmixed in England as they were with Byron. Since German criticism, our scepticism is more profound and general than before; yet it is more philosophical, quiet, and discriminating than his, feeling its way, in however tentative a manner, to a reconstruction of religion, not on the whole attempting to shatter it altogether. Shelley, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Tennyson, for instance, poets of faith, though they were ignored as long as possible, have now more influence over our spiritual life than Byron. Byron's mocking, half-earnest, half-eighteenth-century temper is ill in accordance with our present attitude—scepticism is reverent in an age which has produced such earnest and illustrious Christians as Newman and Maurice. But the English public of Byron's own day were less tolerant of his irreligion than the same public is now. The legal authorities were on the point of refusing to protect his publisher's copyright in the case of “Cain” and the “Vision of Judgment.” If Christianity is by our leading thinkers politely ignored, at least it is ignored *politely*. Our tendency to vindicate the glory and dignity of the body as against orthodox asceticism is, however, a return in Byron's direction. And there are symptoms of reaction against that elaborate artificial affectation of poetic style which is characteristic of an age in England that calls itself *practical*—fairly domestic, devoted heart and soul to those material gains, which involve, on the one hand, a population of grimy native helots, who, being degraded from their higher humanity, murmur, yet forbear from violence; and, on the other, a population of Judases ready to sell their very Master (in the “dearest market”) for thirty pieces of silver, or less—each individual and the whole nation

being careless of the rights or wrongs of any neighbour. From this sort of public life our poets withdraw themselves into studies and studios, and by the help of culture, criticism, and revived antiquity, elaborate their native tongue, as a recent critic in the *Quarterly* observes, into the most celestial of Chinese; in which I think we partly discern, indeed, the result of richer thought and more complex imaginative feeling, but chiefly that of deficient interest in action, and deficient variety of true passion. Feeling and thought lose themselves in tortuous labyrinths of wordy filigree, ostensibly provided for their *habitat*; one sickly sentiment is diluted homœopathically in oceans of what is called "exquisite expression." The literary influences at work to produce this result may be traced up through Mr. Tennyson to the sources I indicated at the beginning; though Mr. Tennyson's own lyrics are among the most exquisite in the language; and he himself is a master of *true expression*, for he has much to *express*; indeed his sovereignty over language and metre is wonderful; but he has an occasional mannerism which is dangerously catching, and which inferior writers are sure to exaggerate. Still his high Miltonic standard, both of poetic substance and artistic workmanship, has raised the whole general tone of English writers and readers, and to him we owe all grateful allegiance. But Byron had formed his style on Pope and Dryden, two great models of clear, nervous English; and it would certainly be well if we studied them more, together with Milton, Wordsworth, Scott, and Byron himself.

One more word as to this element of *welt-schmerz* which the Continental critics justly conceive to be so eminently characteristic of Byron. Nearly all great writing, we must remember, nearly all great art, has been sorrowful or tragic. Even the favoured youthful Greeks, with their healthful unconsciousness and exquisite instinct in harmony with their surroundings, once out of Homer's heroic age (and there is high tragedy in Homer), have their great dramatists composing terrible dramas of relentless overwhelming Fate. Turn to the grand Hebrew poets. What of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Solomon? Then, if we except our own early poet Chaucer, and examine the most illustrious of Christian poets, we shall be led to the same conclusion. Take Shakspeare, Dante, and Milton—Shakspeare, with all his rich humanity and buoyant humour, how profoundly sorrowful, terribly tragic! "*Wo du das genie erblickst erblickst du auch die martyr krone.*" It was the Olympian Goethe who said that. But our gods are not the pagan Olympians. Our God is the Man of Sorrows; and we hold His life and death to be more godlike than any Greek contentment with any present lot, however enviable. We ourselves suffer more; new ideas, new imaginings, new endeavours entail a heritage of more complex pain, bewilderment, and disappointment; we can no longer lead the gay healthful life of a Greek; and if we were ever so favoured, how, since

Christ, shall we be happy when so vast a proportion of our brethren are miserable, for has not Christ taught us that even Helots and barbarians are our brethren? "*Une immense espérance a traversé la terre*"—henceforth unrest is the law of our existence, and what if the Star of Hope has set? It is here, we believe; but for Byron, labouring in the deep trough of a dark billow of the world-ocean, the huge travelling wave of sorrow had blotted it away! And how, asks Mr. Symonds in his brilliant poet's book on the Greek poets, shall a race in its maturity, with centuries of sad history behind it, be joyful? Yet is there much of glory and joy in this history! Nor are we in our old age! For see how in Byron's day Nelson and Wellington fought—how we have taken and held India, and colonized the world—how Livingstone and our great explorers penetrate the heart of mysterious continents—how ghostly ramparts of the old world's seclusion fall at our mere presence, as the strong walls of Jericho fell before the trumpet-blast of Israel! But in advanced civilizations, with over-swollen luxury of the few and contrasted misery of the many, the noblest must be saddest—especially students, who live that unhealthy life which exaggerated division of labour, and a sedentary habit, has entailed upon them. To this must be added a peculiar, wild melancholy characteristic of Northern peoples in their damp chill atmosphere and dark romantic scenery, that melancholy which we feel in solemn purple mountains, umbrageous forests, turbulent grey seas, and which has passed alike into the primitive national songs, into the glory of Gothic cathedrals, into the taciturn rugged character of our common people. Moreover in Byron there was a lingering belief in that very distinctive orthodoxy which he denied—even in the doctrine of everlasting punishment, and a revengeful God, which he denounced so vehemently—those Pagan monstrosities which the world will be well rid of at whatever cost. Nevertheless, good service as he has done us herein, these dogmas still manifestly haunted him; and if Calvinism be, as it certainly is, the most reasonable of orthodox creeds, it assuredly is a gloomy one. Nor had Byron the power of thought necessary for shaping for himself that eternally true creed anew; but in the form of some illogical semi-theistic fatalism it still appears in his writings, in his conversations, in his conduct. And after all, must *we* not sorrowfully reject Maurice's magnificent version of Christianity? Is it not an awful *fact* that sin and sorrow, and then sin and sorrow again in grim endless convolved perplexities, do engender their own infernal selves for ever and for ever!! Lethe, forgetfulness, "surcease of sin and sorrow," this poet's heroes crave—and alas! never find it.

The concentrated gloom of many Puritan generations on the one hand, and many half insane lonely barbaric nobles on the other, haunted his brain like some phantom mist, waiting only to be summoned into most palpable Horror by individual experiences of the

man—which assuredly were not wanting! In the very face of his unbelief, nay in the very face of his personally unsensitive conscience as to those carnal excesses which Christianity brands with severest reprobation, his sense of guilt is in some moods manifestly overwhelming; almost equal to that of St. Paul—or if you prefer it, reminding one of Judas!

Of Byron personally we have but to remember that his own early youth was nourished by stern dark influences of Northern sea and sky, and heath-clad rocky mountain—in a land populous with weird legend—pride of race was in his blood—pride of the old Barons Byron, and the yet more illustrious ancestry of his impoverished mother; she who taught the sullen brooding child to be so conscious of his high position and to resent the disproportion between his fallen fortunes and the greatness of his house; she who, while injudiciously fond, yet taunted him with his lameness when angry—a lameness that so treated might well help to make him bitter. What an education was this boy's, who needed such extraordinary and kindly moral training! But fierce and ungovernable as his mother's moods were, his grandfather's had been the same—he who killed his neighbour in a savage duel by candle-light, and lived afterwards, grimly secluded in the old abbey at Newstead, shunned and gloomy, and accused of half insane eccentricities (himself a very Lara), as the boy heard when he and his mother arrived at their ancestral abode, so ancient, lonely, and ruinous. With dim traditions and ghost-tales of old monks hovering about the place, and emblazoned arms of warriors on the windows, what wonder if this boy poet imbibed an air of mystery and mediæval romance? What an exquisite description has he given of his early home in “Don Juan,” showing how profoundly it had impressed him! As for his father, he was a handsome *roué* like Don Juan himself. How must the modern revolutionary spirit have contended in this man for mastery with the temper of a haughty English aristocrat—the haughtier for his poverty,—with the epicurean tastes moreover of a beautiful dandy, and petted child of high society!* But he needed the stimulus of insult, of

* There was indeed the feudal independence of a lawless baron piercing through his post-revolutionary humanitarianism, both in conduct and in poetry. It is true that he hated the stupid traditional orthodoxy of Legitimists, but he sincerely liked those imposing despotisms that are on one side the modern offspring of old tyrannies. He admired Napoleon; loved to imitate and be compared with him; admired Ali Pacha, and thought of setting up a Pachalik himself on some Greek island; if he had been offered the crown of Greece at the congress of Salona, to attend which he was on the point of setting out when he died, Trelawny and Dr. Elze both think he would have accepted it. He burst out crying from flattered vanity when his name was first read out with “Dominus” before it at Harrow—he hated people to call him by his name without the lord. He quarrelled with our ambassador at Constantinople on a point of precedence. He would not land at Malta because he expected a salute from the forts, and finally sneaked into La Vallette without it, as Galt relates with a

rejection, of opprobrium, to rouse the slumbering lion, to develop his mighty genius in the direction proper to it.

The "Hours of Idleness" are melancholy and querulous, but they have no concentrated bitterness or agony. He says himself, he should "never have worn the motley mantle of the poet, if some one had not told him to forego it." The taste of his true quality comes out first in the "English Bards;" though even that is chiefly noticeable for wounded vanity and talent in the region of sarcasm. After this he travelled, on his return publishing successively the "Tales," and "Childe Harold." In these he put himself forward under thin literary disguises as a melancholy hero of romance, and a *roué*: and the result was, that he "woke one morning and found himself famous:" never was there such sudden and general popularity, partly due, no doubt, to the fact that he was a peer, and a *parti* who mixed freely in society, with the special recommendations of beautiful face and figure, "interesting" genius, *spirituel* conversation, and the vague reputation of being charmingly wicked; so he got as much petting as any reigning belle; and gave himself airs accordingly. But he was soon to pay the penalty of good fortune. He had been over-praised for the work he had actually performed, and he had, moreover, made enemies among men and women by his successes and his affectations, though chiefly no doubt by his sterling merits, which men, and especially literary men, were not likely to forgive. He had married a truly excellent and noble lady, who perhaps wished to reform him, but soon retired in disgust from a task which she found so far beyond her powers: this marriage, with little affection and with no mutual comprehension or toleration, was soon broken up; and then, no one knows exactly how, the darkest rumours gathered about the husband; bursting anon over his head in a tempest of most virtuous execration, wherein the notoriously sensitive holiness of English society in the days of the Regency showed itself, like Hamlet's mother, "much offended." Byron, indeed, fancied there might be some cant in all that, having himself seen something of this holiness when it sat knee to knee with him, cheek by jowl with him, drinking, and ogling—though Mrs. Stowe appears to believe in it. The fact is, he had no business to be a genius, and to sin out of the regular grooves in which it is proper and respectable for good society and the *bourgeoisie* to sin. So villanous fashionable seducers, and fraudulent domestic tradesmen, "compounded for sins they were inclined to, by damning those they had no mind to," and waved him aside as less pious than themselves. And he who confessed that the meanest thing's blame gave him more pain than the highest man's praise gave him pleasure—how must he have winced under the insult and opprobrium

chuckle. The pomp of his travelling arrangements after the separation was excessive and worse than absurd, for the meanest thing he ever did was to use his wife's fortune after that event.

that raged around him, even though he, in his heart, contemned most of the righteous amateur inquisitors who inflicted punishment. The finest skins are the most sensitive—what a triumph for vermin! No doubt there are men of cold, serene, self-possessed temperament, who are as thoroughly independent of their fellows as Byron professed to be, but, as has been said, these do not print so many passionate cantos to inform their fellows of the fact. Why, he winced even when a nameless jackass donned the lion's-skin of some ephemerally popular review, and brayed at his poetry from under it. He could not be content with enduring fame, and the consciousness of good work done—he must needs clutch at immense and immediate reputation, though that was to be shared with him by jugglers and acrobats, literary or otherwise. Hence in part the blot of sensationalism, to catch the uneducated taste for gaudiness of effect, in his work.

Byron, moreover, burnt the candle at both ends. Think what an amount of intellectual labour—and that of a creative kind—of a fierce, emotional, imaginative kind—this man went through before he was thirty-seven! How bulky are his works—and in addition we have the long destroyed memoirs, the innumerable letters sparkling with wit, teeming with observation. Besides he lived always, and lived moreover in early youth, the life of a *roué*. These conditions alone are sufficient when we take into account his highly nervous, excitable, delicate organization, and the deleterious amount of spirits he drank, to explain his fits of depression, his moments of anguish. He was subject, moreover, to constant fevers, than which nothing is more depressing. So that on the whole, considering the utterly different nature and circumstances of the two men, it does not seem as if Mr. Carlyle's reiterated reproach to Byron, that he was no stoic, amounted to very much.

I own I think the "Tales" are underrated by modern critics. All their defects may be granted—they are fragmentary, the plots are ill-constructed, sometimes almost *nil*, they are monotonous, and, above all, there is a certain theatrical hollowness about them, which is indeed the vulnerable Achilles'-heel of Byron for his modern detractors. Nevertheless the episodes, even if they be only episodes, are in themselves wonderfully astir with wild life and turbulent passion, the verse is generally musical and rapid, while there is often a pause of softer lyrical beauty with an exquisite perfume of its own, to which Scott far more rarely attains. Thus almost all the passages (though they can be detached and recited as separate lyrics) in the "Giaour" are beautiful, and how lovely are the opening lines about the lovers in "Parisina!" as well as that incident of the page bending over dying Lara. The "Corsair," on the whole, seems to me the finest and most spirited of this series—it has in it all the freshness of youth and buoyant enjoyment, as well as the very spirit of romance and troubadour love; it has women, charming, beautiful, tender, and

passionate ; it has pathos ; it has some of the finest lines that have ever been written about the sea, even by Byron, the bounding clarion notes of the pirate's opening song—" *O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea.*" By some able modern critics, indeed, accustomed to our thoughtful, metaphysical, academic, or domestic strains, all except one phase of Byron's mighty genius (that of "Don Juan," and "Vision of Judgment") has been abandoned, on the ground that it is theatrical, and conventional ; that his heroes are not heroic. Now this has a great deal of truth in it, and Byron acknowledges himself that these early works were too sentimental and stogy. Still, for all that, something may be said even in favour of their general conception, in favour of that central ideal which gave them such unity as they possess.

It does not follow because a myriad dunces have mouthed and still mouth in the trappings of a great actor, and we weary of these trappings, that he was not a great actor. What astonished Walter Scott was this—that Byron, though in "Childe Harold," and we may even say in "Cain" and "Manfred," as well as in the "Tales," he continued to represent only one human figure as the centre of all, could still succeed in forcibly arresting men's attention. In truth, he wears the tragic mask of an actor of old Greek tragedy—set to one monotonous, terrible, or sorrowful expression : his heroes are ideals of human misfortune, sin, woe, and passionate power, that partly recall those of Greek tragedy. This gloomy Byronic hero is now the favourite type of low melodrama in cheap fiction and on the stage—a capital subject for burlesque. Nevertheless, he was at that time a perfectly legitimate and fascinating hero of romance, by virtue of certain obvious and indestructible tendencies to admire very common in human nature. He was in fact a personage of the *same order* as Hamlet, Timon, Faust, and Fouqué's magical creation, Sintram. He must be accepted as a modern descendant of mediæval Barons and Minstrels—truly an *evil* modern Knight, with a conscience restless from remorse, with high gifts of intellect and imagination, thirsting for joy and for pure love, yet clogged with satiety, withered with disappointment, endowed, however, with many knightly virtues, in all the pride of blasted beauty and high lineage degraded—even in the bosom of Nature, the Healer whom he adores as divine, haunted by melancholy wrecks of his own spiritual life. This half knight, half Miltonic Satan, is an embodiment of rebellion against man and God ; yet of reconciliation with both through love of Justice and Mercy ; half in harmony with the modern spirit, half in harmony with the ancient that is passing away ; it has moreover even a moral beauty of its own as of a human ruin stern and lonely in proud decay ; festooned with some of Nature's fairest perennial flowers. But it is eminently romantic and picturesque—Gothic, fantastic ; all light and shadow, mystery, and vast space, flushed

here with gorgeous colours, there grey and severe—neither classical nor flippant courtly and didactic, like poetry of the 18th century ; nor moralized, and beginning to be reconciled in its own fashion with the old faith, like Mr. Tennyson's and some of our best poetry now—a transition poetry of tumult and revolt, of volcanic aggressive individualism half reverting to the lawlessness and anarchy of primæval societies ; to the Ishmaelite whose hand is against every man ; the child of Nature asserting himself against the decadence of an artificial, decrepid, tyrannical civilization wrongfully usurping the titles and thunders of the Most High. This is as truly romantic as Spenser, Walter Scott, Ariosto, or the Minnesingers. "Faust" and "Manfred" are in fact the legitimate descendants of this mediæval poetry—even of the early Mysteries and Miracle-Plays. Moreover, Spenser, and the Italian romantic poets, are quite as luscious in description as Byron—that element they owe in common to the study of later classical literature, Theocritus, Virgil, Ovid—and some of it to that of the East, Byron personally having a good deal of the soft, luxurious Eastern in him, developed by personal experience in eastern climates. [There was at the same time a great romantic movement in Germany, headed by the Schlegels, Tieck, Jean Paul.] It must be recollected further that the old heroes of romance, for the most part *sans peur*, were very seldom *sans reproche*. But the elements of moral mystery, tragical destiny, high gifts rendered abortive and a curse to the possessor, and what may be termed the more superficial graces of these heroes, all these, wrought up with the skill of a Byron, whose "own" the "song" was, form a fine subject for artistic presentation in the romantic region of art—they appeal to the imagination of mankind, to such imaginations as those of Goethe, Shelley, Coleridge, and Scott ; although, indeed, the perpetual repetition of such portraiture showed the narrow range at that period of the poet's power. His, indeed, were not self-possessed, self-sacrificing heroes of the highest type, like Schiller's William Tell. But it is not necessary to hold them up as models for imitation, even though Byron may have a vain, self-conscious weakness for these violent, ill-regulated, selfish characters. At any rate, however low morally his poetic ideal might be (and *one* of his ideals was Washington, as he tells us in a splendid stanza of "Childe Harold," and as we might know by his life), the question for criticism is how far his figures are portrayed with the hand of a master ; and it was certainly because he could identify himself with them in some moods that he portrayed them so well. Whatever an artist can render artistically interesting by art, that is a proper subject for art ; it becomes imaginative truth ; but the error of certain writers has been to distort some lower elements of human nature by making them relatively too prominent, and not duly contrasting them with other elements. Byron made himself in "Childe Harold," not too

obtrusively, the centre of his graphic and imaginative descriptions of countries over which centuries of stirring and splendid history expand wings of dusky glory, and surely the brooding melancholy figure was no inappropriate centre ; a beautiful genius of death, of sorrow, and of unrest. Ever he held up before the world a vast and lurid Human Image ; but too thoroughly aware of its own dignity, and contemning others—herein reverting to the philosophic pride of elect spirits as inculcated by Paganism, and adapted thence by doctors of theology into Christianity, under the guise of religious Pharisaism, but retrograding from the true Christian ideal of election to universal service—scarcely malignant, yet formed to be the ruin of all who approached ; like Job deserted in his calamity, yet justifying himself in the face of Heaven as against hypocritical moral verdicts of his fellows ; communing alone in whirlwind and cloud with phantoms of departed heroes, and vanished empires—Harold in starlit palaces of the Cæsars, among ivied rents of ruin, or upon the solitary seashore—Manfred upon some desolate Alp, conversing familiarly with spirits of the elements ; for whom the very countenance of Love herself has been contorted into the Gorgon-face of Crime, Crime with fury features and snaky hair. In what terrible harmony is this figure, half-man, half-demon, with these blasted crags that surround him, born of old in throes of earthquake and in fire, snowed upon out of the slow centuries, shrouded in oceans of implacable ice ! So looms this awful Image out of the stormcloud, as though stricken with the curse of a hateful immortality ; wandering through all lands ; bearing the burden of a world's sorrow ; wailing the wail of human misery ; like Prometheus on Caucasus scarred with Heaven's lightning, and blistered with His frost, agonizing for sins inherited and imposed ; but, alas ! bearing no message for human redemption ; no conscious martyr-conqueror of sacred fire from divine altars, wherewithal to regenerate the race ; only lifting ever a red right hand with Cain, and huge scowling armies of the outcasts—rebel leader of all who are miserable, fate-stricken, and oppressed—testifying in the face of God and men that all is not well, as the comfortable have decreed, though they feast with a smile over buried bodies of their victims.

It seems to me uncritical to draw too broad a line of demarcation between the early and later works of Byron, though it is unquestionably right to prefer the later ; but the same identical, intense, passionate, susceptible, scornful soul appears in all. And it is part of the very essence of this strange shroud of romantic half-chivalrous mystery wherewith Byron loves to invest his characters, and through them indirectly his own personality, that there should glow, as it were, doubtfully through the folds thereof a certain deadly lurid light of guilt unnameable, whose inborn fatality overwhelms the soul with despair, and leaves the man no rest. This is especially the

element that is now inveighed against as poisonous and satanic—now indicated as claptrap and humbug.

But it may be argued that as Byron has used the blood-red hue, it is a perfectly legitimate, as well as effective, element of tragic interest in his work of art. Toned down to harmony with other features of the picture, represented as in some sense a mysterious doom, guilt, and the misery which it works in a soul not destitute of virtue and aspirations after a higher life—this element in Byron appears to me neither immoral, nor inartistic, nor ridiculous. Is it the duty of the artist always to hold up before us models of excellence for imitation? If so, of course we must condemn Byron, and enthrone Miss Edgeworth or Mr. Tupper. But then what of Othello and Iago, Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, the Duchess of Malfi, and most of those other mixed humanities of Elizabethan drama? What of *Œdipus* and *Medea*? indeed of all the greatest masters in imaginative creation? Byron's representations do not, I think, ignore the *difference* between good and evil any more than those of Shakspeare do, though they may indicate laxity in his own estimate of what is right and wrong, in certain respects. I do not see, for instance, that he violates the conditions under which evil may be represented, even as laid down in the very rich, and delicately discriminating essays of Mr. R. H. Hutton; only that Mr. Hutton perhaps insists too much (by implication) on the moral aspect of a subject being always prominently presented. That Byron *dwells too much* on the passionate and so far weak class of characters, and that these are not sufficiently balanced by other types, has been admitted; but this is rather a fault in plastic skill than anything else. There certainly arose at that time—Byron and Rousseau contributing much to the phenomenon—a kind of priesthood, which, claiming to displace the old, showed itself scarcely more tolerant and tender in its bearing toward the common people, in favour of whose rights its members had ostensibly arisen, than that traditional priesthood against whose tyranny they so iconoclastically declaimed. Every "man of genius" became a sort of supreme pontiff without a faith, whose whims and weaknesses and peculiar fancies were to be held as sacred—a pretension perhaps more dangerous than those of a regular priesthood, since these were at least defined and confirmed by venerable authorities in the world's face. Sensitive young persons, moreover, persuaded themselves too easily that *they* were within this privileged indefinable circle, being naturally eager to claim a right of participating in such agreeable immunities; so that the ranks of this new priesthood did not want for candidates, whose credentials there existed unfortunately no recognized bishop once for all to verify. Doubtless, then, too much emphasis was laid by Rousseau, Byron, and Shelley, upon mere sentiment, impulse, and passion, as distinguished from conscience, reason, and deliberate self-control. So far as Byronism is to be regarded as an ideal, it is certainly a low one;

though, at the same time, it is unquestionably a higher than that of the average Mammon-worshipping Briton—and on the whole advantageous as a corrective of his—while Byron sets before the Englishman assuredly certain high qualities for which the *élite* of his nation have been deservedly celebrated, and not least that aristocracy to which the poet belonged; nor is it amiss that the average man should learn to reverence genius and superiority, and the glories of external Nature. If Byron lays undue stress on such advantages as those of rank and high lineage—on those of beauty, strength, prowess, or refinement—methinks his work is full of counterbalancing influences; and these things themselves may not be quite so despicable as commonplace levelling down democracy supposes. Science is teaching us not unduly to despise *race*, as instinct had taught us before; moreover, since soul and body are but reverse faces of the same living man or woman, I doubt beauty of body being so execrable a thing as ill-favoured Methodism would persuade us. Then, again, though the protest is a healthy one which vigorous moralists like Mr. Kingsley have made against that foolish, mischievous notion, that men of genius are privileged in their errors and weaknesses, instead of possessing their high gifts for purposes of human service—we must not altogether forget that virtue is not knowledge or sensibility, but rather a due balance of the faculties under a moral sense. Artistic genius is, on the other hand, a very uncommon sensibility and corresponding faculty dominating the possessor: it would certainly be well if with this were always associated that balance and moral sense we call virtue. But is it always so, and is it likely to be generally so? In proportion as sympathies and susceptibilities are acute in one direction, must there be danger of undue predominance, and in proportion to their variety will be the probability of some one interfering now and again with the claims of another. When a man feels a multitude of conflicting impulses, aspirations, and longings, he must be endowed with an exceptionally virtuous spirit in order for him to keep the middle path of virtue as securely and invariably as another. But it does not follow that he must be so endowed. He sees life, and a special phase of life haloed with the aureole of imagination; the reality disappoints him: he then revolts against his condition, and seeks some other, not always with due regard for the claims of a partner, nor with the tender long-suffering he owes her. His mobility of temperament and ardour of imagination are in arms against his constancy and duty.

That men of genius have, for the most part, been unhappy in their domestic relations has been often affirmed and explained, and perhaps cannot well be denied. Happy are they who have proved exceptions! happy in the noble gentle partners God gave them, and possibly in their own highly gifted moral natures. But I do not see why sinners of genius should be inveighed against as *ipso facto* greater sinners than

average men. Shakspeare, for instance, gives one the notion of complete sanity and balanced universality in genius ; yet what we know of his history and what we read in the Sonnets does not favour the idea of a perfectly proper person who could have written perfectly proper articles in the *Saturday Review*. There is no use blinking the fact, moreover, that riot, self-indulgence, and the irregular life Byron lived made him just the great specific poetic personality he was—the very interpreter of his time. He drew more than any poet from personal experience, and his strongly marked passionate wandering career gave him the materials of his strongest and intensest poetry. What would this man have done if he had “lived at home and at ease ?” if he had gone out shooting all his life with Sir Ralph Milbanke, and only listened over his wine to “that damnable monologue which elderly gentlemen are pleased to call conversation ?” He might have gone to church at Kirkby Mallory on Sunday, fulfilling in every way the decalogue, and the whole duty of an Englishman ; but he would not have written the concluding cantos of “Childe Harold,” “Cain,” “Manfred,” or “Don Juan ;” he would not have been Byron ; for Sorrow and Sin trod his spirit as their wine-press, and lo ! the blood-red wine of Genius, with omnipotent aroma, expressed in bitter anguish and boundless despair. “They learn in sorrow what they teach in song.” All honour to “deaneries,” and “angels” in balmorals, and clerical lawns for croquet. But volcanoes and earthquakes too are needed, or they would not be. “Wrong” we may brand the volcano, with its devastation of human cereals, dwelling-houses, and properties in general, very wrong indeed ; still “stormy wind,” as well as gentle breeze, “fulfills His word.” All are not fitted for the domestic ideal, though only fools or knaves fail to feel that, when fulfilled by high human natures, it is the very noblest, as, surely with one dear woman and sweet children, it is happiest ; the obvious and true ideal of our civilized majority. But in some there remains the wild blood of the nomade, and dweller in tents of Ishmael ; these, whether they be artists or explorers, soldiers or sailors, have their true Bohemian function elsewhere, and are simply thrown away upon drawing-rooms and deaneries, however decorous. There are, too, for that matter, women who must be single and are better so ; Aspasia here and there it may be ; students and devotees of knowledge, monks, ascetics, and such like abnormal persons ; hero-martyrs on occasion of some ideal cause ; none of them fitted for the honourable incumbrance of a family ; yet it may easily happen that some of these will mistake their vocation, or perish in the vain attempt to reconcile vocations that prove incompatible. Let not, however, what Mr. Morley calls our “unlovely temple of *comfort*” be regarded as though it were the very temple of God !

But it must have been with some sense of triumphant humour

that Byron (he was a wag, and this must always be borne in mind) proceeded to dispose his magician's robe of stormful misanthropy in becoming folds around him, and, positively by flaunting it all sulphurous with the crime he had been banished for in the face of implacable society, brought this stern stepmother to his feet dissolved in repentant tears ! Now I am far from believing that this remorseful guilt was merely invented for purposes of art ; it is so essential to the personality he generally delineates, which is substantially his own. Byron is chiefly a *lyrical* poet, as Dr. Elze names him ; and I cannot think that he was either immaculate, or the fiend that Mrs. Stowe and other virtuous writers have delineated.

When a man's life is so much before us, as he evidently intended it should be, when he has deliberately expressed so much of it in his poetry, we cannot ignore it ; and we owe our best thanks to Dr. Elze, and his highly competent translator, for so lively a summary of what is known as to Byron's biography. If the editor of "Macmillan's Magazine" had not expressed himself so happy to introduce Mrs. Stowe's "strange story" to the British public, that might have been left alone ; but Dr. Elze, and even immaculate Saturday Reviewers, have discussed it ; so I shall here allude to it in passing.

Byron avers that he never seduced a woman in his life, by which I understand that he never took advantage of a young girl's innocence, deceiving her to her injury. But it is conceivable that he did not feel, any more than Shelley, precisely the same instinctive attractions and repulsions as the majority of mankind in sexual regions. Shelley deliberately defends incest, and Byron certainly does something of the same sort in "Cain." I think with Mr. Rossetti that the evidence on this head is so conflicting that we cannot condemn him. Mrs. Stowe says Lady Byron told her that he confessed and justified the crime to her. I cannot help thinking that Lady Byron unwittingly exaggerated this and many other circumstances of their unfortunate union, in talking matters over with intimate friends, and brooding over her wrongs. So admirable a man of genius, our national glory, and a noble lady of such rare excellence, with so many admirable gifts, as all who knew her agree, [who but fool or knave dare deny them ?] alas ! what an irony of Fate to bring just these two together ! Ascetic purity face to face with sensuality incarnate ! If *she* "wanted one sweet weakness, to forgive," how much self-restraint and chivalrous affectionate service did *he* not want ? His ideas and actions were revolting to her, his very passionate impulsiveness was so ; when he broke a valuable watch out of vexation at their pecuniary embarrassment, this seemed to her one symptom of madness, as did his other eccentricities also ; he, because she persistently rubbed his fur the wrong way, and was so rigidly implacable, became exasperated, painted himself to her in the blackest of colours, and delighted the more to shock her. The Guiccioli allows that he confessed to an unusual

warmth of manner towards his sister even in the presence of Lady Byron, which familiarity is, it will be noticed, the only *proof* Lady Byron gave to Mrs. Stowe (for the nonsense about a child, since so amply refuted, I cannot but suppose Mrs. Stowe must have misunderstood). This unusual warmth in a fiery nature like his, where the ordinary demarcations of affection and passion are not so definitely marked as in most men, is conceivable, and would perfectly explain Lady Byron's charge, especially as there were arguments between them, and he would be likely obstinately to justify himself; even accuse himself of actions he had not committed. His own heated imagination even may have magnified his offence—especially when he viewed it under the influence of Lady Byron, he himself not clearly distinguishing his strong affection from passion under the lurid horror reflected from the conscience of society. For Lady Byron evidently did possess influence over him; he respected her greatly, and it is probable even that he drew her likeness in one of the most exquisite descriptions ever penned of a pure woman, that of Aurora Raby in "Don Juan." He was eminently mobile and susceptible, and had there not been too much mutual repulsion in these two natures, had there been true love, she might have permanently influenced him; but she had her own reasons for giving up the task so soon. He seems to have been often cold and cruel to her—at any rate her own instinctive aversions, and perhaps fear for her daughter, worked powerfully upon her; but when her influence was upon him, he would feel as she did; this and the execration of society, if only unbridled imagination had ever transgressed normal limits, would suffice to fill him with very hell-fire of anguish and remorse, especially as he never succeeded in shaking off that orthodox creed against which he rebelled. Thus in "Manfred" we have the most absorbing love (what can be more intense than the passionate invocation of Manfred to the spirit of his sister Astarte?) steeped in self-accusing despair unutterable for the injury he may have done her, for the doom he may have brought upon her in the other life, yea, for her very love which he may have forfeited, *that human love which is his all in all!* His infinite is the finite—and on the bosom of the finite he falls with infinite yearning, a bosom that crumbles in his embrace, so that he falls, falls ever in the void! But, in sooth, the mere accusation and ban of civilized society might be sufficient to inflame Byron's imagination with the idea of such a situation; while his own morbid pleasure in self-accusations of uncommon guilt might have been almost enough originally to rivet such charges upon himself, till he at last deluded even himself into believing them. Mrs. Stowe's version of his reasons for circulating stories about the separation only among his intimates is surely very uncharitable. He might be too incontinent to suppress these altogether, but he might, out of lingering regard for his wife, wish to imitate her *quasi*-reticence, which after

all was a *quasi*-reticence chiefly ; when he worked himself into a fury about his "wrongs," he would, indeed, say anything, but, knowing he exaggerated, with caution. He was a libertine,—and such men are not as delicate as they should be,—a literary libertine who habitually made reprehensible confidences about his own most private affairs. At times, from his fear of further public ignominy if these charges became still more definite than they were, knowing what Lady Byron believed, whether truly or falsely, and had told to some persons, he might even act in the spirit of such a threat as that which he is reported to have used, alluding to Caleb Williams, that *she* should bear all the blame of their separation. Yet, on the other hand, he constantly affirmed that she was not to blame ; but he naturally shrank from such definite charges as would have been brought against him in a public court, knowing that it might be difficult to refute them beyond controversy. Here, as everywhere, he was made up of contradictions insufficiently harmonized : he was a child of impulse, yet could often give impulse and emotion a calculated turn. What could be more inconsistent than to poison the public mind by dark inuendoes against himself, in order to make people stare and be "interesting," and then to rant, and rave, and lament in the most eloquent poetry when the public took him at his word ? "Self-torturing sophist" he was, like Rousseau. How he longed for love and tranquillity, and profound affection, and home, and children, and how the demons within him drove him ever out of sight of shore ! Such spiritual weakness arising from want of harmony and balance must ever produce misery. A recent writer has said that what proves him a thoroughly bad man is his abusing one mistress to another ; but these intrigues must not be judged like profound affairs of the heart—a libertine's mistress is not likely to spare her lover after the connection is over, any more than her lover to spare her. Byron was not spared in "Glenarvon," for instance.

Byron somewhere enumerates the crimes of which rumour had accused him, wonderful to say, with a curious mixture of complacency, amusement, and yet by no means affected indignation—among others he mentions those of Tiberius and Heliogabalus. Assuredly some of his own expressions, taken together with certain incidents of his career, may quite as easily have exposed him to scandal and exaggerations of this nature also. A cynical, unsocial person is never very leniently regarded by his neighbours, and genius seems "something uncanny" to the million. All his friendships, he affirms, were passionate. The "Hours of Idleness" abound with passionate addresses to his friends.

"Shall fair Euryalus pass by unsung ?"

"Thy mind, in union with thy beauteous form,
Was gentle, but unfit to stem the storm," &c., &c.

Of Lord Clare, who spent whole summer afternoons with him on the

tomb in Harrow-churchyard, he writes in 1851, "I never hear the word *Clare* even now without a beating of the heart;" and his record of their unexpected meeting on the road between Imola and Bologna that year may well be unintelligible to persons of less intense and fiery temperament. At Cambridge he was deeply attached to a young chorister, and wore a cornelian heart which the boy had given him. At Newstead, also, he felt more than usually warm friendship for the son of one of his tenants; and on his second visit to Athens we hear nothing of the "maid, his life," but his heart went forth to a poor youth named Nicolo Giraud, the son of a widow; while there are some curious expressions in a letter of Shelley about his life at Venice. We can imagine what malevolent gossip might make of all this; but is there any proof that it indicates more than the extravagances of a nature far more impulsive and comprehensive in its range of emotions, than is to be met with every day? Then, again, while on the one hand, he was brave and manly, much addicted to and skilled in physical exercises, devoted to outdoor and athletic pursuits; on the other, he had a very feminine element in his character as in his person. Hunt sneers at the rings he loved to display upon his fingers, and Ali Pacha pleased him by praising his curling hair, together with the aristocratic delicacy of his small ears and white hands. He was once taken for a woman in disguise, and in "Don Juan" he draws an attractive picture of the beautiful hero dressed as an Eastern princess. Not only women, but even men could not escape the magic of his fascination, and Lord Holland's little son called him "the gentleman with the beautiful voice." His countenance, like his spirit, was extra-femininely mobile, says a lady, and he could look positively beautiful one moment, but positively ugly the next,—surely herein his face was a reflex of his soul!

I fancy the English were a little unreasonable to cry out when Countess Guiccioli took up the cudgels for Byron, just after such very damaging statements about him had been published, ostensibly on the authority of his wife. If he turned different sides of himself to the two ladies, it seems hard if both may not be shown. The Guiccioli in her old age, having married an Anglophobe marquis, writes that she found Byron a perfect angel during the six years he was with her, and Lady Byron herself, while analyzing his character somewhat sternly and harshly to one of her friends, (she even says he only feigned enthusiasm, in which case he ought to have been a great dramatist, for he feigned enthusiasm to the life) wept when she heard of his death, owning there was an angel in him. But alas! the Guiccioli loved him, and he loved her, as well, at least, as so libertine and disillusioned a nature could love. The picture is a touching one of him at Ravenna, when she had returned with her husband to Bologna, visiting her garden and rooms at their wonted hour of meeting, reading in her favourite books, and bursting into

tears before the fountain in the garden, as he reflected what evil his love might bring upon her. This lady reclaimed him from his debaucheries—as long as he lived he was faithful to her—and I think the charge against him of making no provision for her is one quite susceptible of a favourable explanation.

Byron loved two,—Mary Chaworth, and the Guiccioli. Would that he could have married his first love ! In that beautiful poem, “The Dream,” he confesses that her image was in his soul, even when he stood at the altar with another—*THAT* was the crime of his life in the sight of Heaven, and a black one, however shocking his fleshly vagaries may appear to us ; but *that* is a crime against which civilised society has no conscience. Yet an ideal marriage demands a constancy and stability of soul—of which, alas ! men like Byron and Shelley possess little—chivalrous protectiveness, generosity, magnanimity, memory of the past, faith in the future. To an absorbed ardent spirit the dimming of early rose-colour, and intrusion of fretting trivialities, is very trying ; and Shelley is doubtless right, that *if love dies* the usual vulgar passive acquiescence in a dead contract is—unless from motives of mere expediency or common humanity, which may tell the other way—base and unendurable : a more living love may be sought and found, which, even for the children, may be best.

RODEN NOEL.

(*To be continued.*)

MR. CARINGTON.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DEATH IN LIFE.

Astrologos. He is where never any birds shall fly to him,
Nor any melody of summer meet his ear,
Nor any message enter, any issue thence
To tell a word of him.

Raphael. All fiends are pitiless :
The imperial Fiend is of all fiends most merciless.

The Comedy of Dreams.

PRINCE OISTRAVIEFF, in the hold of the gunboat, was insensible with fear and pain when that mysterious cruiser ran into a Mediterranean port. At a signal from the vessel, a twelve-oared boat came alongside, and the Prince, wrapt in tarpaulin like a bale of goods, was slung over the side, and the gunboat steamed out again as fast as she had entered, taking her rapid way through the Straits, and hugging the coast of Spain, with the doomed Paulovna on board.

When Oistravieff recovered consciousness, he found himself in an evident prison-cell ; with a gas lamp burning high in the stone wall, and a coarse loaf and a jug of water placed for his sustenance ; on the rough wooden table, which was clamped firmly into the floor, was a suit of coarse canvas, such as convicts wear : Oistravieff, shivering with cold, put them on. He was also glad of the hard black bread—he, for whom the choicest delicacies of life had hitherto been provided, and who had been known to have his cook knouted for spoiling an omelette. And then he tried to sleep on the hard boards ; so far succeeding that he fell into a chaos of weak dreams, each more hideous, or more tantalizing than the last. Now he was suffering the knout from stalwart Brakinska, Paulovna pitilessly looking on : now he was dining sumptuously with Paulovna, and the dishes had exquisite flavours, and the champagne was cool in its basket, and music came from gardens outside the room. The terror and the delight of his past life mingled strangely in dreams unrememberable ; dreams chiefly without meaning, which left the brain in a whirl.

“I shall go mad,” cried Oistravieff, when he awoke.

A gaoler renewed his bread and water, and he was thankful for it. Presently the door opened, and a Russian officer, in plain clothes, stood before him, while two French soldiers kept guard outside.

You are Prince Oistravieff," said the new-comer.

"I am."

"You have lately married a serf, in contravention of the laws of the Empire?"

"I was forced into it. Besides, I knew the marriage would be void."

"You have degraded your name by an act of cowardice. Moreover, did you not well know that the woman was a conspirator?"

"I did not know it. I thought her an Englishwoman of loose character."

"And you married such a woman to save your life! That is not the conduct of a Russian Prince."

Oistravieff made no reply. After a pause of a few minutes the officer resumed:

"You are to return to Russia, by command of his Imperial Majesty. You will have an escort of two persons, one of whom will be with you always. You are forbidden to speak on the journey. Do you obey?"

"I obey."

A few hours later, the Prince, dressed in a travelling costume of ordinary character, was seated in a second-class railway carriage, between two Russians. They took no notice of his existence, but talked pleasantly to each other, and refreshed themselves merrily on the way, leaving him to silent thought, and purchasing for him only food enough to keep him from starvation. It was a long, long journey of many days, with the fewest possible stoppages for rest: the Prince's two guardians kept themselves up to the mark with abundant brandy, and seemed rather to enjoy their task. Travellers on many railways marked this strange trio, wondering who, or what they might be; but they went on determinately, taking any obtainable vehicles when railways failed them, and in due time brought their prisoner, in a state of misery and collapse, to the famous city of St. Petersburg.

Here the Prince found a room allotted him, not altogether devoid of comfort, in one of the prisons. Its sole light was from the roof; there was nothing for the eye to rest upon, except the whitewashed wall; there was no sound from without, nor any relief from the intolerable silence except the occasional clang of a prison bell, or the step of the warder pacing the stone gallery outside.

Some men have mind-power to defy the horror of prison, the loss of freedom and society. Who does not envy the gay and gallant spirit of the soldier-poet who sang?—

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage:
Minds innocent and quiet take,
This for a hermitage."

There have been those who could find solace from the society of a

spider, or a mouse ; while others, strengthening themselves against adverse destiny, have lived in the world of science or of poetry, rewarding with golden gifts the fools who imprisoned them. But this small-brained princely barbarian, had neither sympathy nor power. Haughty and insolent when prosperous, the first blow struck him to the ground. So in this confinement, the Prince fell into an absolute lethargy, from which, however, he was in time aroused. For one day an officer of the prison entered, bearing a goodly amount of foolscap paper, together with pens and ink, and placed them on the table, saying,—

“Prince Oistravieff, it is the pleasure of his Imperial Majesty that you write at length the history of your life, from the time of your succeeding your father to the present moment. You are to begin at once, and what you have written will be removed each evening ; tell the whole truth on all points, as his Imperial Majesty has means of ascertaining it, and will severely punish any falsehood.”

Russians are usually fluent writers and speakers, and invariably have good memories ; so that the task set to Oistravieff was not so difficult as it would have been to an Englishman, who only remembers what he deems important. Oistravieff set to work with energy, finding the occupation a great relief, and described in glowing colours for the Emperor's satisfaction his demesnes, and the happiness of the serfs upon them, and the delight he had felt in carrying out the Imperial Will. He knew that before he left Russia, he had been rather a favourite with his Majesty ; the reason being that he was tall and well-built, and rode well, and looked as if he would make a good soldier. It did not occur to him that the Czar was not the man to tolerate a voluptuary and a coward. He rejoiced in the thought that this order to write an account of his life, was a mark of favour, and that freedom might follow. He made the best of himself : but he dared tell no lie.

The Czar, who was fond of psychic experiment, had these papers read to him by a secretary as an evening amusement. When he came to the incident of Paulovna's disgrace, and the brutal ill-treatment of her brother and her lover, he sprang from his sofa, fiercely, and said,—

“Scoundrel ! No wonder we are abused by the English for our serfs. Well, I will wait a little : let him go on.”

So the poor Prince, little guessing the effect produced by his memoir on his august Master, went on with his wretched story. He described his English adventures in detail. He described his entanglement with Lily Page ; the visit to the Red House ; the threats under which he had married Paulovna ; the unlucky ending of his honeymoon. He wound up with a superb flourish as to his devotion to his Imperial Majesty, his ability to communicate valuable information concerning most of the countries of Europe, especially as to England, and what he had

heard on high authority in London, as to her weakness in the East, his profound desire to prostrate himself at the feet of his Imperial Master.

"Faugh!" said the Czar, "the fellow is an abomination: such men disgrace us before Europe with their cowardly cruelty. Bring me a decree to sign at once; he shall go to Siberia for life."

Such was the end of Oistravieff's memoir—and of Oistravieff himself. It has been asserted that these events greatly tended to accelerate the Emancipation of the Serfs.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

BRAKINSKA ATTEMPTS REVENGE.

Astrologos. Nay, good my lord, act warily:
The mad churl's pistol may upset a dynasty.

Raphael. Well, let the dynasty go. Come, cast my horoscope,
And you will find that I was born when Jupiter
Just dimmed fair Venus' lovely light at eventide—
Only just dimmed it. *The Comedy of Dreams.*

DEMETRIUS BRAKINSKA sped straight to London. All fear of consequences left him when he thought of his poor sweetheart's fate. The natural brave temper of the man, always warped and concealed by conspiracy, came back again. He remembered the happy time years ago when he and Paulovna were betrothed; the rustic songs and dances; the joyous fancies of quiet days to come. He remembered how when the Prince came down and praised Paulovna's beauty, there seemed to hover a shadow over the future, though he was yet unsuspecting of harm. And then the hideous crime . . . the pale shuddering Paulovna's silent misery . . . the brute punishment inflicted on him and Ivan because they dared interfere! The whole bit into his brain like acid into metal as the train took him towards London.

And what a fool he had been to join the conspiracy! But for his oath he might—and *would*—have killed Oistravieff the first time he saw him in London. Oaths should be thrown to the winds now. If Oistravieff was beyond his reach, at the bottom of the sea, there was ANOTHER . . . whom he knew by instinct to be Paulovna's murderer.

It was Paulovna's influence that had made him a conspirator. So much had he loved that girl that he aided her in her scheme to marry the Prince. He would not disobey her for the world. And now he thought of her . . . dead; cruelly tortured; her beautiful young life cut short by the orders of a cold-blooded, weak-brained, chicken-hearted tyrant. He would have his revenge, if it could be had. He felt in his coat-pocket for the loaded six-chambered revolver which

was his customary companion. It consoled him to think how soon it would do service.

As he approached London he discussed within himself whether he should try to find Ivan. He decided not—for three reasons. He did not know where to look for Ivan; he did not wish Ivan to risk his life with him; and he feared being recognized and hindered in London. So he went straight on to Dover, eating nothing, for a crumb would have choked him, but drinking at intervals great gulps of raw brandy.

The passage to Calais in the most miserable of all packet-boats was a long and stormy one. Demetrius took no note of it, but sat on deck, holding on by one hand while the other clutched the pistol in his pocket, and longing for Paris. Paris came at last: Brakinska had a passport perfectly *en règle*, for this was one of the customs of his wandering fraternity—and he walked unsuspected into the city, resolved to lose no time in what he had to do.

It was afternoon, brandy, which will keep a man moving for a long time, will not indefinitely postpone the pangs of hunger—those pangs Demetrius began to feel, and went into the first unpretending café he saw, and ordered something . . . he hardly knew what. A man who sat at a table opposite, marked him for some time eating ravenously, and then rose and hurried out, saying a word to the keeper of the café as he passed. By curious ill-luck, Demetrius had entered a café much frequented by *mouchards*, and was recognized at once. He was happily ignorant of this. He finished his meal rapidly, glancing through a journal, while he ate: an announcement in that journal determined his movements. He called for the *addition*, and was surprised at the pertinacity with which the waiter pressed him to take something more. Unpersuadable he went away, clutching his bosom-friend: and the café-keeper, as he passed through the door, whispered—

“See where he goes, Jules.”

Not easy for the feeble little French waiter to keep that stalwart Russian in view. He was soon at fault. Demetrius dived into by-streets as soon as he could, aware that for him to be recognized was only too likely, and that recognition would spoil his revenge. He lurked in out of the way corners, choosing, when the gas was lighted, the darkest and gloomiest he could find, clutching his pistol, thinking of Paulovna, thinking of Number One.

But as the bells of numerous churches struck eight together, he stood with a mighty crowd in front of a stately theatre, its front ablaze with light, its carpeted vestibule full of lovely exotic flowers. It was the first representation of a tragedy whose theme was patriotism, heroism, liberty. The author was a poet, as poets go, in France: there seem to be none now like the Duc d'Orleans, Rousard Reney de Belleau on the one hand . . . like Olivier Basseliu or

François Villou on the other. The play had been heralded by much trumpeting: Nebuchadnezzar could hardly have surpassed it with that wonderful concert in honour of the Golden Image. All the world was to be there, from the Emperor to the *gamin* . . . only the *gamin* would have an outside place. Of course Number One would be there.

A fluctuating excited crowd. Much soldiery, horse and foot. The glory of France, that imperishable entity in the material form of floating plumes, flashing steel, uniforms most magnificent. A train of carriages floating down the lighted street, every one of which contains either a lady or a general, ready for conquests. A crowd of *bourgeoises mouchards*, *gamins*, what not? Demetrius Brakinska in the midst of them. *Vive l'Empereur!*

What did he see of that brilliant pageant, since swept away as if it were a dream? Nothing. He looked only for one face, as he stood impassive by the portico, his right hand in his breast-pocket, ready on the instant, Demetrius Brakinska knew his own keenness of sight and quickness of touch. He feared not missing his quarry. He knew he should suffer death for it, but it did not trouble him. One thought lit up the chambers of his brain like fire, and nerved his strong right hand to iron steadiness . . . his poor dead Paulovna.

What would the Parisian crowd that clustered around him have thought if they had known the fatal intent of this tall Russian wrapt in his heavy coat? Ah, Demetrius, may no one have guessed it in this city of spies? It is no trivial affair to fight Number One.

His carriage comes. I suppose Demetrius knows it by instinct, for he clutches more closely the butt of his pistol, and his finger is on the trigger. The door opens. There descends a short flabby man, who looks as if all his life he had been through the Bankruptcy Court, and paying the very smallest dividends.

As he descends the steps, Brakinska's pistol marks him down . . . the shot rings through the street. There is a shriek. There is a yell. There is a second shot.

Ah, but Brakinska had been watched. As he fired, a man at his right struck his arm up, and the shot passed just above the illustrious head, shattering the carriage door.

As he fired a man at his left clapped a pistol to his ear, and down fell Demetrius Brakinska, dead on the spot.

The poor fellow's lurking in corners had foiled the *mouchards*; but they waited for him at the theatre door . . . and so he lost his revenge.

The news travelled all over Europe; travelled fast enough from land to land; reached Delamere as the Earl and Carington were having a chat over the prospects of Europe.

"There was nothing to identify the man, according to the papers," says Carington. "But it was poor Brakinska, I'll swear. Their shooting him down at once, which is ascribed 'to excess of zeal on the

part of an officer, who has been reprimanded,' is a proof, if Demetrius had been publicly examined there would have been a surprise for Europe."

"How long is this to last?" said the Earl. "It is a great scandal."

"But inevitable. We want a good fierce war. Poor Demetrius! he was a brave fellow."

"A hero," said the Earl. "He shall have a cenotaph of marble in this hall."

"I must go and frighten Rachette and the Marchesa," said Mr. Carington.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

L'HOMME PROPOSE.

Astrologos. You say that you're in love, you little reprobate?

Alouette. In love! Of course. What do men bring up daughters for, Except to love; the cat must have its mice you know, And when a kitten, watches at the wainscoting; The unfledged bird, whose wings are rudimentary, (A favourite word of yours, papa!) desires to fly . . .

Astrologos. And often topples from the nest and breaks its neck.

The Comedy of Dreams.

MR. CARINGTON did not allow the Marchesa to rush down to Carlisle in search of her Leo: indeed the story he had to tell her of Demetrius Brakinska completely frightened her out of any such notion. He knew well that if Frank Noel's comrade were the man at whom he guessed, any attempt to seek him would end in his flying off at a tangent, like a comet that is caught in a planet's atmosphere. He had heard of too many reappearances to be surprised if this man should turn out to be Rollo; but, being of that wise temper of Lord Melbourne's, which induces a man to "let things alone" when he cannot quite see the wisest course, he resolved to follow that principle on the present occasion. Besides, he had matters nearer at hand to attend to. He saw clearly what lode-star drew Frank Noel so straight northward; he knew the meaning of that visionary look in Elinor's eyes; he meant in this case also to "leave things alone," and see what happened.

It was a merry March morning. "If a peck of March dust is worth a king's ransom," all the kings of the earth since kings were invented might have been bought with the clouds of dust raised by the strong east wind that day. It was a frolic waltzing wind, that went in for whirls and eddies, catching ponderous old ladies at street corners of Carlisle, and raising them a foot or so from the ground, and then dropping them quietly on their feet. Luckily there was a brilliant

sun, which softened the keenness of the wind : to man or woman in perfect health it was a perfect day. Elinor, full of health, full of hope, full of love, rose early and went out through the gardens, and wandered on the fell, whose virgin turf was softer than any carpet. Raffaella had teased her the night before.

"Did he think I had dressed his pretty doll nicely?" she asked. "Was he pleased, do you think? He looked very happy—what a charming boy he is! I could find it in my heart to run away with him, if it would not break yours."

Elinor had no wit to reply : folk in love are never witty : it is indeed no laughing matter. Happily the Marchesa was dreadfully sleepy after excitement and champagne : so Elinor managed to send her to bed, and nothing was seen of her till long after noon next day, when Mr. Carington came to tell her of Brakinska's fate. At this terrible news her courage of the night before departed at once : she had no more to say about seeking Leo at Carlisle, but settled down to her chocolate and brioches (how well Rachette served both!) under the guardianship of Tasse.

Elinor was on the fell, romping with the merry March wind, which kissed her and pulled her about audaciously, dishevelled her hair, and rumpling her petticoats, and making her look twenty times lovelier than the Marchesa had. Who can fathom the thoughts of a girl who holds in her hand love's priceless pearl ; who feels it there, though she has not heard from her lover's lips the loving word? She cannot fathom herself, O no! nor understand the ruddy glow that lies on the rocks in Eden's stream, and makes the dark tarn look like a dream of old romance. Ay, me! who is it that has paid this beautiful child a visit? Who casts this golden glamour over the ancient fells for this pretty rover? The world is changed ; the hall might be a fairy palace by some far sea ; the tarn might be Sir Lancelot's mere. Yet is there ringing in her ear a soft clear voice that seems to say : "The world will be changed still more to-day."

She did not guess that Frank Noel could see her as she ascended the hillside : but all the pleasantest bedrooms looked towards the fell, and among these was Frank's. He, lazy fellow, had awoken a full hour later than his lady-love, and had not begun to dress when he caught a glimpse of her lithe figure on the hillside. Nobody could mistake her : certainly, not Frank. He dressed rapidly ; rang for refreshment (our material sex must have their seltzer and brandy even when in love) ; was disgusted when the servant brought him a letter therewith.

"From Pinniger," he said to himself. "I'll open it as I go up the fell. Now's the time to catch my beautiful bird. We can never be more perfectly alone than on the fell in the solitary morning."

He carelessly shoved the letter into his pocket, and tramped away up the steep hill-side as if he had been all his life a mountaineer.

True the downs of Wilts are not a bad introduction to the fells of Strathclyde. If in your boyhood you have played hockey and football against a Wiltshire hill, you need not fear Skiddaw . . . or even Mont Blanc.

There is a lovely mysterious little tarn under a granite block at the summit of Laughton Fell. It is roughly circular; about ten feet in diameter; always stands at the same height. Once a year, at midnight on the Eve of Saint John, its water is said to rise into a column, like a waterspout seen at sea: and whoever ventures to see this sight may, when it subsides, read the manner of his death in the mirror of the tarn. It is not related that many adventurers have tried the experiment. On this merry March morn Langton Tarn looked as little as you can conceive like a mirror of death: for beneath the huge boulders of granite fifty feet high, which must have been flung there in some tremendous throe of Earth, myriads of myriads of years ago, sat . . . trying to regain her breath and to braid her hair . . . the loveliest girl in the world, witness Frank Noel.

She looked up and saw him; *hinnuleo similis*, she sprang to her feet:

"How you startled me, Mr. Noel!" she said. "How early you are!"

"Some one I know is earlier."

They sat silent awhile, looking . . . not at each other . . . but at the picturesque turrets of Delamere Hall, their gilt vanes fretted by the wild wind and lighted by the sun.

Suddenly Frank Noel said:

"Elinor, do you know what brought me from Salisbury here?"

"Yes," she said, looking merrily at him.

"Will you say *yes* to my next question?"

"How can I tell, sir? Perhaps it will be . . . *Do you hate me?*"

"Elinor, my darling," said Frank, rising from his seat by her side, and looking down upon her, "I am a slow fellow, I have been slow all my life. But if I am slow I am steadfast, and what I once say is always true. I love you, and shall never love any one else. Can you love me?"

"If you would let me get up, I would kiss you, you dear old Frank. Yes, I *do* love you: I think I loved you the minute I saw you . . . and up to that minute I had thought it impossible I could ever meet anybody I could love. I used to wish I could meet somebody like what Mr. Carington must have been in his youth. O Frank, I *do* love you."

She was in his arms now, in his loyal and loving embrace, and he sat on the granite ledge with her fair head on his shoulder, smoothing her wind-tossed hair. They were very happy under the great rock, cosily sheltered from the east wind, with the windy vanes of the great house of the Delameres glittering in the sun. Very happy were

they, though they uttered no words ; though the time passed unconsciously, and the world beyond appeared an empty dream. Then Elinor knew the meaning of that change which some strange voice had whispered in her ear.

Such trances must have an end. Their trance was broken by the clangour of the breakfast-bell at Delamere, which always rang at ten to the instant, even if there were no one to breakfast.

"Frank," said Elinor, springing up, and gaily kissing his brow, "you must talk to Mr. Carington. He knows who I am : I don't. All I know is, I haven't got any money, which seems necessary to existence in these days."

"Pooh !" says Frank, "I've got a trifle, about five hundred a year : and can't I work ? you should see me. I thought of turning farmer, Elinor."

"How delightful ! I was brought up at a farm. I can milk cows like an angel, and am remarkably clever in pigs."

"Hurrah ! we shall be as jolly as possible. I'll talk to Carington as soon as I can find him. He knows everybody and everything. By the way, Elinor, I didn't see that little Lucy last night : what's become of her ?"

"That little Lucy ! Now, Frank, if you're a general lover I've nothing to do with you. I know nothing about that little Lucy. She was only a servant, I believe : not having seen her for a day or two, I supposed she had been sent away."

"Ah, likely enough," said Frank, though he was not altogether satisfied that Lucy was a servant merely. But on his slow perception dawned the idea that it was as well not to let his lady-love imagine he cared to remember the name of any other woman. The man of the world knows better. Flirting with the Belle of the season at Lady Mactartan's, he says . . .

"Do you know that scraggy girl with yellow hair . . . can't remember her name . . . had to take her down to supper last night at the Omillions . . . dreadful people, those Omillions : Stockbrokers I think they call them . . . but they give good suppers. Do you know the girl ?"

Of course it is the Rival Belle . . . second favourite.

"Oh," she says, sweetly, "don't you think her pretty ? A slender form, you know, and hair true auburn. Really, Mr. Fitzflatter."

"Well, really, Miss Velvetine, *that is not my style.*"

And an emphatic look accompanied the emphatic words. But what had he said to the Rival Belle at the Omillions' ?

Suddenly Frank Noel remembered Pinniger's letter, took it from his pocket, and broke the seal. He had a habit of looking at the end of a letter first : what he read herein so astonished him that he said,

"Do read this letter, Elinor, I can't make it out."

Thus it ran :

"DEAR NOEL,

"You remember, when I was telling you that I was about to change my offices, I asked you whether I should continue to take charge of the portrait of your ancestor, that worthy of Sarum, Matthew Noel, and of the cabinet, which was also made an heirloom. You wished me to do so.

"In the removal, an unlucky accident took place. The cabinet was dropped, through the men's awkwardness, and being very old, was completely dislocated. When placed in the room assigned for it the back was quite loose, and on examining it, I perceived that some secret drawer or compartment had been forced open by the shock. This compartment contained a small ebony casket: its key was tied to its handle.

"Opening it (for I knew you could trust me, and thought it as well to solve the mystery) I found two packets. On one was written, in old Matthew Noel's hand, *To be opened by my Heir*. This I have placed among your other documents till I hear from you.

"What do you think was the other packet, Master Frank? It was without address, so I examined it. Very yellow was the paper, and very thin: there were twenty sheets . . . and each sheet was a Bank of England note for a thousand pounds! Won't the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street be astonished when those forgotten notes have to be turned into gold? Won't my friend Frank Noel set up his farm immediately?

"Yours always,

"PINNIGER."

He was Town Clerk . . . and Town Clerks sign like Peers.

Frank and Elinor looked at each other in amazement as this letter was read.

"I don't know much about money," she said, "but twenty thousand pounds seem a great deal."

"About a month's income for Lord Delamere," he replied. "It seems incredible, but I can believe it: the old boy was uncommonly careful, and Pinniger never makes mistakes."

"Then you will be able to have your farm, Frank, as soon as you like."

"That twenty thousand pounds is yours, love. This is our real wedding day, and it comes as a wedding gift. We will buy a farm with it, if you like, and it shall be your farm, and I will be your head man."

"O, Frank!"

"Yes, Elinor, this is your fortune. Old Matthew Noel evidently meant it for you, or it would not have come on your wedding day. But now I *must* go and talk to Carington."

She tripped up to her room: luckily the Great Hall had so many

ways of egress and ingress that people seldom met on the stairs. She ran up to her room, this loving Elinor, and threw herself on her knees, by her bedside, in a passion of happy tears, and thanked God for Frank Noel.

Frank, meanwhile, had found Mr. Carington, and requested a few minutes' conversation. They sat in Mr. Carington's room; and he was rather surprised when Frank, instead of broaching the expected topic, handed him Pinniger's letter. This he read carefully: then he said,—

"It is all quite right, evidently. And so you have set your heart upon being a farmer. As Pinniger says, this will just do the thing comfortably."

"I have other designs for the money, sir. I have already given it to my future wife."

"Indeed," says Mr. Carington; "pray, who is the lady?"

"Elinor," says Frank.

"Miss Elinor Nameless, eh, my boy? I have foreseen this complication. I saw it must come to this. Take heart, and I will pull you through it."

"What do you mean, Mr. Carington?" asked Frank, half frightened. "What is there to fear?"

"Your own pride, Frank. Come, can you listen quietly to a long story? I have nothing to do for an hour or so. We will have a glass of wine and a biscuit, and you shall listen to what it is important you should know."

Frank acquiesced. Tokay and Presburg biscuits were placed on the table. Mr. Carington began his narrative.

"The Earl of Delamere married, about forty years ago, a Miss Mary Powell, a pretty Welsh girl, of no birth. The marriage was kept quiet, as his father was then alive. She gave him a son. But, soon after he married her, he discovered that she was at intervals completely imbecile, and had been so from her birth. Her crafty parents had carefully prevented her from seeing him during courtship, except in her lucid intervals. He was disgusted. He took his son away from her and had him brought up elsewhere. He sent her home to her parents with a sufficient allowance, insisting on secrecy as to the marriage. She died soon after; but Delamere paid them for secrecy to the end of their lives, whence it is generally supposed that he has never married, and his death will cause great excitement among heirs-at-law and next of kin. The evidence of the marriage has, however, been carefully verified, and is placed in the record chamber here at Delamere.

"The boy was christened Rollo, an old name of the house. When he was old enough, his father sent him off to a middle-class school at Rothwell, in Northamptonshire, kept by a fellow called Maddox. Delamere was then living a wild life in town: you know too well one

terrible incident of his career which he can never forget. Neither he nor your father, Frank, were good fellows in those days : I watched them both : I prophesied the quarrel. But they were true friends, for all that : and, I think, if Lovelace Noel had lived he might have become worthy of his son."

"Thank you, sir," said Frank, simply.

"I left Rollo at Maddox's : he went there when about twelve. The warp in his mother's mind showed itself in his case in a wilder form : there were times when he seemed absolutely mad. While he was a mere child, the schoolmaster, who had the true antique notions on the subject of flogging, could keep him in reasonable order : but he grew into a regular young giant, and Maddox began to be afraid of him. Delamere paid the man as much as he got by the rest of his school, some fifty boys, together : so he kept him on, being most unwilling to lose so liberal an allowance. The history of Rollo's school life must remain unwritten : I have only such information about it as Maddox himself one day gave me, when he came whining to my rooms in Jermyn Street to ask if Mr. Delamere would give him compensation : as his school was ruined. I could only get rid of him by a five-pound note.

"Rollo robbed orchards : so do all schoolboys. He broke bounds ; he was out of nights ; he committed other venial offences. Maddox could have pardoned this. But Maddox had a pretty sister-in-law, Mary Applegate ; and he deemed it entirely wrong that Rollo should be seen leaving that young person's chamber when the bell rang in the morning. Rollo, moreover, having method in his madness, organized a conspiracy among the bigger boys, his chief ally being one Bullivant, a huge fellow, dull, but ready to fight under orders. Through this conspiracy came the climax, which caused Maddox to come to town, and request Rollo's removal. He had done something so wicked, that Maddox plucked up courage, and ordained that he should be flogged. Rollo gave the word to his fellow-conspirators, and they flogged the schoolmaster instead.

"This, of course, ended his Rothwell experience. He was in his nineteenth year, a noble young fellow, but not broken in. The moment I saw him, I knew I could break him in if I had time. Unluckily I had not much time just then : I was living a pleasant London life with a dozen dinner cards a day, and nothing else to do. Rollo had been told that Delamere was his father, and he had always used his surname. But he supposed that he was only his natural son. For some time he lived in my rooms, and I tried to tame him : I could have tamed him thoroughly if only there had been the chance. He cared for no one but me : he would not see his father. I thought his father treated him unfairly in allowing him to suppose himself illegitimate : and I determined to tell him of his father's marriage.

One day when he was in his usual mad mood, and I was trying to quiet him, he said,—

“‘Look here, Carington, it's no good, what do I care what becomes of me? I am one of those unfortunate creatures who come into the world when they are not wanted, and are looked upon as a disgrace to everybody, and are dragged up anyhow. Who cares for me? If I die to-morrow it will be considered a good riddance. No; I won't see my father.’

“‘But suppose you are legitimate?’ I said.

“‘No; that cannot be, I should not have been such an outcast.’

“I then told him the truth. He was silent for a minute, and then swore fiercely that he would neither see his father again, nor go into society. After that I think he was madder than ever.

“In the autumn, when he was in his twentieth year, I told him I was going off on one of my riding tours: would he come with me? He was delighted at the notion. We were well mounted, and made our way into the very centre of England. My idea was to explore Shakspeare's country, but we got no farther than Warwick. There Rollo happened to have a school friend, the redoubtable Bullivant, already mentioned, who helped him to thrash the schoolmaster. Bullivant was an obvious fool: but it is often observable in families that, where the boys are fools the girls are clever.

“Theresa Bullivant was a marvellously clever girl, and very beautiful. Although I was nearly forty years old, and ought to have known better, I fell desperately in love with her. It is the only time in my life since I was a boy that I have been foolish enough to fall in love. Whether Theresa would have made a good wife I cannot now say. Certainly the connection was not a desirable one; but I was too much in love to consider that at the time. We stayed in the neighbourhood some time that I might see as much of her as possible; and through Rollo's acquaintance with young Bullivant, we had many invitations to the house. I told Rollo how much I admired Theresa, and I fancied that he liked another of the sisters. One morning when Rollo had been away for a couple of days (he was often away, and I was never astonished at anything he did) he came in to me in an excited way and said:

“‘Look here, Carington, I've married Theresa Bullivant; I don't know what made me do it,—I felt so mad. I think it was because you wanted her. I can't help it. Make the governor look after her, for I'm off.’

“I have never seen him since. Two years later there came intelligence of the foundering of the ship *Vespasian*, late at night, off Grisez, all hands lost . . . among them Rollo Delamere. This information was confirmed, after the fullest possible inquiry. Hence there is every reason to believe he is dead.

“I am getting near the end of this long story, Frank. Theresa

gave birth to a daughter. Rollo had not told the Bullivants his real position, so poor Theresa, who lived only two years after the birth of her child, did not know that she had any claim upon Delamere. I wrote to Delamere on the subject, and he offered to pay, through me, an annuity to Theresa. I saw that the Bullivants were incapable of bringing up the child after poor Theresa died, so I begged to be allowed to take her from them altogether. I put her in the care of an ancient relation who I knew would bring her up properly. When Delamere succeeded to the earldom I pressed upon him the importance of acknowledging his own marriage and his son's. But he would not do so. This is my business here now: and I have at length brought it to a successful ending. You will not be surprised to hear that Rollo's child is your Elinor . . . *yours*, I say, for I see you are both in earnest."

Frank was staggered.

"Tell me, Mr. Carington, what I am to do? How can I marry her, being so much above me in wealth and rank? If the Earl consented, it would be only because he wants to make amends for having killed my father. What am I to do?"

"Frank," said Mr. Carington, "I quite expected this. You are proud, rightly proud: you belong to as good a family as there is in England. Still, look at the matter the other way, my dear boy. Hadn't you pleasure in thinking that Elinor was a pretty little pauper?—that the twenty thousand that turned up just at the nick of time was a nice present for her? Now, don't you think it will give your Elinor infinite pleasure to do for you what you thought of doing for her? Why should she not? There is selfishness in the independence which refuses to receive anything from the woman who loves you."

"All you say is right, my dear Mr. Carington, and I will take your advice above that of any man . . . I will accept your opinion rather than my own. Tell me what shall I do?"

"Go to your Elinor: tell her all I have told you: talk it over from end to end. She has not the slightest idea that she will probably be Countess of Delamere in her own right . . . for the Earldom goes in the female line. Tell her the whole story."

"But," said Frank, "my position is doubly awkward. Elinor and I loved one another before we had the least idea there was this impassable gulf between us."

"*Impassable!*"

"Is it not?"

"Assuredly not. Now I am a mere man of the world, as you know, Frank. There is no poetry in *my* soul. I go in for comfort and quiet, moderate habits and early hours. Yet even to my commonplace intellect it seems that in this imbroglio there is one paramount consideration. Take the three words, *money*,

rank, love : how would you range them ? Which do you place first ? ”

“ Love, of course,” said Frank, unhesitatingly.

“ Love, of course. Rank, a bad second. Money, third ; loving second place by a neck. Well, here are you and Elinor in love. Two courses are open to you. First, this : be unselfish, and don’t marry. What results ? You run wild, and spend that twenty thousand of old Matt Noel’s in a year ; Elinor pines, is shut up for a year or two in the Great Hall—is then shut up for ever in the family vault . . . the last Countess of Delamere. The carrion crows of Chancery gorge the great Delamere estates.

“ Come, Frank, don’t be foolish. Go and talk it over with Elinor. Her healthy mind will soon set you right. Ask her how she likes the idea of

‘ *Mr. Noel and the Countess of Delamere.* ’ ”

Frank went.

“ I should like to deprive the boy of his grievance,” thought Mr. Carington. “ But it can’t be Rollo.”

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

DIEU DISPOSE.

Astrologos. I have known men who died, and came to life again ;
I have known men who died, and came to death again.
I have known men who neither lived nor died at all,
But were pure phantoms, shadows on the atmosphere.

Raphael. Poor ghosts, who shivered through the world.

The Comedy of Dreams.

God has his way. Milton humorously makes the rebel angels, much bored during the absence of their Prince on the first geographical exploration known to history, occupy their time in high reasonings

“ Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate ;
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute.”

That they “ found no end, in wandering mazes lost,” is no matter for wonder, seeing they had just thrown away the clue. The question has disturbed men, as well as rebellious spirits, from time immemorial to time instant : the solution is intelligible only to those who understand that they are one with the Divinity. My will is free, because God’s will is free : He and I can no more differ in opinion than my brain and my hand can differ. No man understands himself who can think of himself apart from God. A certain poet has written—

"Helen and I look out upon the west.
O unimaginable sunset ! O
Soft sky in mystic waves of colours drest,
With great Apollo's final kiss aglow !
O lights that lessen, linger, glisten, grow !
Almighty Artist, never do I see
Thy little lightest touch of fire or snow,
Of bird that sings, of blossom upon tree,
Without that inner silent saying : *I love Thee.*"

Were this, instead of a story, a philosophic treatise, it would be easy to show that fixed fate and free will are ultimately identical ; but in order to do this it would be necessary to postulate the existence of a Deity, which seems too much for ninety-nine of a hundred modern philosophers. Yet even Voltaire said that if there were no God, it would be necessary to invent one.

Frank Noel, taking Mr. Carington's advice, went in search of Elinor. She was with the Marchesa. Impatient to talk to her, he went to Raffaella's apartment : that lively lady, who had by this time forgotten her fright about Brakinska, set Tasso at him by way of welcome. The little white dog barked and snarled ; the little white lady laughed and sang ; Frank only looked rueful, and Elinor, who saw he wanted to talk to her, looked almost as bad. The Marchesa was delighted.

"You two children are both in love," she said, "and not with one another. Nothing else could make you so dull. If it was *one another*, you would be making love before my eyes, and treating me as if I were nobody. You see, I know the signs."

Poor dear Frank, weighed with Mr. Carington's revelation, had not a word to throw at a dog—much less at this fantastic Florentine ; and as to Elinor, she saw so clearly that her lover was troubled about something, that she hardly listened to what her friend said. Probably the Marchesa had some idea of the situation, for she suddenly exclaimed,—

"Oh ! go away, please, both of you ! You are making me so dull that I shall begin to think I am English, not Italy. Now do go, that's dear young people : Tasso and I can amuse one another."

Thus adjured, Frank and Elinor took their leave, and went together into the Hall, which was deserted.

"Elinor, my love," said Frank, standing with his back to the fire and looking moodily into space, "I am most unhappy."

"Why, Frank ?"

"It seems ludicrous," he went on, without answering her question ; "you and I love one another, I think ?"

"I should think we did," she exclaimed, indignantly.

"Well, the right thing to do is to marry ; but how are we to do that when Carington tells me that you are Lord Delamere's granddaughter, and heiress to the title and estates ?"

"Is that true?" asked Elinor, gravely.

"Carington says so—what he says is true."

She laughed quite merrily.

"Now do they think, Frank, and do you think; that there is any claim upon me to behave as the heiress of the Delameres might be expected to? If they had brought me up to it from the nursery, I might have considered myself made of pure aristocratic gold, and not deigned to look at anybody carved in baser metal. It is too late now; and glad I am it is too late. You and I don't want the estate, Frank: couldn't they find a male heir somewhere? I like this glorious old house, and I like my grandfather; but I love *you*, Frank, and I won't let you off. I know exactly what it is. Proud boy! you don't want your wife to have more 'rascal counters' than yourself. Did I object, sir, to that casual twenty thousand pounds? I am ashamed of you men. What are money and rank against love?"

"That's what Carington said."

"Of course he did. Mr. Carington is a man of the right sort. You, being his godson, ought to be like him. What in the world is it between you and me, whether I am a countess or a village maiden? What you have heard has not changed *me*; why should it change you? I am Elinor; I was Elinor this morning when you said you loved me—when I had no estates, no title, no surname even. I don't want estates or title or surname; I want your love."

"You have it, darling Elinor," said Frank; "but you don't see the difficulties of my position. The world will say I married you, not for yourself, but for position, money, and the like."

"And why should not the world say so, you foolish Frank? If you had married me without a farthing, the world would have laughed at your silliness; now it will envy your cleverness. Is either of the two worth consideration?"

"You only say what I quite believe, my own love; but I cannot help shrinking from the thought that people will fancy I had sordid reasons for marrying you."

"O dear me, what a fuss about nothing!" cries Elinor. "I'll advertise in the *Times* that you asked me to marry you before you had the least idea of who I was. Will that do?"

Frank could not help laughing at her energy. Quite agreeing with her, his natural pride came in the way of his acting on what he knew to be the right principle. Besides, there was another consideration, which, after some hesitation, he communicated to her.

"Elinor," he said, "another thing is that I fear Lord Delamere won't object."

"Well, Frank, that is an odd thing to fear. What can you mean?"

"Simply this. Lord Delamere thinks he is bound to do all he

can for me, because he was unfortunate enough to kill my father in a duel."

"Your father, Frank?"

"Yes, the very day I was born. They were great friends, but quarrelled and fought about some trifle. Mr. Carington was there. That is what makes the Earl ask me here. Now if he would refuse me right out, I should say, 'Go to the devil! Elinor is mine, and I mean to have her.' But if he makes no objection in the world, I shall feel that he is giving you to me just because he happened to shoot my father."

"My dear cantankerous cross-grained Frank! I can so easily settle all that. I have only to ask the Earl to say that nothing shall induce him to sanction our marriage. He'll do it directly. He is just the sort of grandfather I like: I am so glad you have introduced him to me in that capacity."

"What a madcap you are, Elinor! Why will you not consider the matter seriously?"

"You foolish Frank," she said, putting her arm around him, "how can I be serious on the day that my own dear love has told me he loves me? Why it is the gayest day of my life, Frank. Do you mean to try and make me miserable on this day of all the days of my life? You shan't do it, sir."

Frank could not resist her joyous words, or the loving, laughing look of her happy eyes. He said,—

"Elinor, you shall be mistress to-day. I will forget that you may be a countess."

Just as he said this, a servitor came to say that Lord Delamere would be glad to see them. They went to his apartment at once, Elinor giving Frank a smile of gay encouragement. Of course they found Mr. Carington there: he indeed had been discussing the state of affairs with the Earl at considerable length, and it was agreed between them that this was the right time to put matters straight.

There was silence for some time after they entered. Then the Earl spoke.

"It is a difficult thing, Frank Noel and Elinor Delamere, for an old man to tell two children like you that he has acted often foolishly and sometimes wickedly. Yet, when you are as old as I, perhaps you may have left something behind that you would willingly forget. Now I hear that you love one another. Elinor is my granddaughter; Frank is the son of my dearest friend. It is vain to mourn over the irretrievable past: the best amends I can make, standing on the verge of eternity, is to try to make you happy in the future. Carington has told you our family history, Frank: you, I suppose, have told Elinor."

"No, my lord."

"Well, you can when you have no better subject of discourse

Elinor, when I die, will be the Countess Delamere, owner of this place and half a dozen others. There are good honourable stewards, so everything will be right. I have made no will : all property will pass to my granddaughter. This is not the sort of talk for two young lovers, I know ; but I want you, Frank Noel, to consider that you will have important duties to perform. You will of course be the real manager of these great estates, and just now is a time when land-owners have splendid opportunities of doing good. I am too old. You and Elinor, young and energetic, happy yourselves, have a grand chance of making thousands happy."

"We will try," said Elinor.

"Remember, Frank," said the Earl with a laugh, "you will be no mere Prince Consort. Though not the Earl, you will be the Countess's master. And, if you like to worry the Prime Minister, he will give you a peerage in return for the votes you can command. I have four safe boroughs. But, if you do go in for politics, I recommend you to try the House of Commons yourself. It is a great arena for a man who can articulate and is not too clever."

"Frank knows and cares no more about politics than about Hebrew," said Mr. Carington. "Stay at home with your wife and look after your estate ; that's my notion for a country gentleman, and that will suit Frank. Now, Delamere, unless you want to lengthen your lecture, suppose we dismiss these youngsters to their billing and cooing. When a young lady on the same day discovers an unknown grandfather and a future husband, which will she prefer ?"

"Thanks for your persiflage, Carington," said the Earl : "it helps me to throw off past memories, the nightmares of age. I am happier to-day than I have been for many a year ; for I think I have done what is right, and I hope the old house of Delamere will be worthily represented. You understand me, Carington, which is what I cannot expect from Frank and Elinor."

"I think we do," said Frank Noel.

"I am glad of it," said the Earl. "From this day the past is past—utterly. I shall think of nothing but your future."

Frank and Elinor left Lord Delamere : Mr. Carington remained awhile.

"Now that I have settled everything according to your advice, Carington,—which, mind you, I consider to have been devilish good advice,—I don't care how soon I shuffle off this mortal coil."

"Don't you? I do. I want you to live a century, Delamere, to amaze the puny weaklings of the present generation. Frank and Elinor will be fit for nothing but love-making for a year, at least ; after that, I foresee that Frank will ripen into a country gentleman of the true type, and Elinor, who is a mere child as yet, into a lady worthy to be heiress of the Delameres. But if their responsibilities begin too soon, it will spoil them. So you

must be contented to remain on this earth a year or two longer, and not be in such a devil of a hurry to become an angel."

"Your advice is good," said the Earl, "though your phraseology is curious. Certainly I should make an odd angel. I have never seriously regarded myself in that respect."

When Mr. Carington left the Earl he went to see the Marchesa, well aware that she would deem herself deserted.

"O Frank," she said as he entered, "what has happened? No one comes near me. I thought we were besieged. I have been setting Tasso at imaginary enemies all day. Ah, I am so glad! he has torn your trousers. What have I done to be deserted in this way?"

"My dear Raffaellotta," said Mr. Carington, taking her hand—a little pink shell it looked, as it lay in the palm of his, long-fingered, filbert-nailed, and free of flesh—"those two young people have been making love all day. They have come to an understanding. I have been closeted with the Earl. Now that all is settled, I came to you as soon as possible; but Frank and Elinor are away love-making, and I dare say we shan't see them till dinner."

"It is very selfish of them," she said. "I declare, there they are, going up the hill—as if they could not have quite enough of each other *after* they are married."

"You must forgive the first day, Raffaella. We are all of us fools once in our lives. I assure you I had hard work to bring these young people together."

"Why, any one could see they were in love," said the Marchesa.

"O yes, they were in love; but it came out that Elinor was the Earl's granddaughter, and will inherit all his property: so Frank thought it would be wrong to marry her."

"Queer race, you English!" said Raffaella. "You weigh and count your sovereigns, and keep them in your banks and cash-boxes, and rattle them in your pockets. You worship them. Here is poor dear Frank Noel thinking it wrong to marry the little doll I dressed for him, because she will have so much a year more than himself, and be called a Countess. I could understand this anywhere else; but in England I thought a man was a man. Have I been mistaken all this time? I thought that an Earl and a gentleman—like Frank Noel—were on equal terms in England."

"They are," said Mr. Carington.

"Then what is all this trouble about? If two people love one another, are they to compare the values of their property before they come to an agreement? If one has a saucepan more than the other, is the match to be broken off? And if one saucepan, a million saucepans: the actual amount makes no difference. The difference between Elinor's property and Frank's is only an immense saucepan of gold. What can it matter, when two people marry, which happens to have most money?"

"You are a charming logician, Raffaella," said Mr. Carington, "but it is the same everywhere. We live in a time when the accumulation of money is the chief object of most men's lives. I don't care about money, myself; in fact, I seldom have any worth mentioning. I live chiefly at the houses of my friends, and my tradespeople never send in their bills. I really think I don't spend a thousand a year. But I am an economical man, whereas just now extravagance is the fashion. How much do you spend a year, Raffaella?"

"O please don't ask. More than I've got, always."

Frank and Elinor, having had their lecture, walked up to Langton Tarn to get it blown away. When they reached the memorable place—the granite ledge beneath the mighty granite boulder—they sat down and were silent. Frank had his arm round Elinor's waist, and felt that power of possession which is the male creature's delight. Suddenly he exclaimed,—

"What a nuisance money is! I wish nobody had any."

"Oh!" says Elinor, "it is very useful, now and then."

"Yes, but look at you and me. I've got enough to live upon comfortably. You will have two hundred times as much. What can you do with the other hundred and ninety-nine?"

"What an infant you are!" says Elinor. "My grandfather is a poorer man than you. You have about a thousand a year and no responsibilities; he has two hundred thousand, and five or six great houses to maintain, and an ancient position to uphold. He is lord-lieutenant of the county: what do you suppose that costs him? I quite dread succeeding him—it will be such a heavy weight; but you *must* help me, Frank: you *will* help me?"

"My darling," said Frank, "will I not?" He looked into her lovely changeful eyes, and then he kissed her eyelids, and then he said,—

"If I am to manage this vast estate, I will do my best to make everyone happy who works upon it. That's the first thing, eh, Elinor?"

"Of course it is."

"I would rather have had a cosy little farm of my own, with my Elinor milking the cows now and then for fun; but if I am to be husband of the richest peeress in England I suppose I must do my duty."

"My dear Frank," said Elinor, looking at him with a lovely, loving smile, "you will do what is right, I know. Don't trouble yourself about the future. Lord Delamere will live twenty years more, at least; and you will be quite tired of me in twenty years."

"Twenty!" says Frank. "Well, you give yourself quite a long innings."

It had been arranged, in honour of the betrothal, that the Earl should dine in the Hall this evening; and Richette's lively imagina-

tion had devised several absolute novelties. His *pouding postiche*, which looked exactly like a bombshell, was a great success. Lord Delamere could scarcely remove his eyes from Frank and Elinor all the time: he was wondering whether the new blood of the Sarum Noels would invigorate the Delamere fluid. There was not much conversation: the young folk had talked their talk by Langton Tarn, and had nothing fresh to say. So it was altogether a quiet little entertainment on this occasion. The party consisted of the Earl, Mr. Carington, Frank, the Marchesa, and Elinor—as pretty a quintette as you would be likely to see anywhere. Two such charming women, in styles so absolutely different, are seldom to be seen; and it is needless to say that, each in his own way, the Earl and Carington and Frank, were men worth looking at.

They had a pleasant evening, and the Earl was full of brilliancy and wit; but he left early, as was his wont. The others sat later. Suddenly, amid laughter caused by some fantastic utterance of the Marchesa's, Frank Noel said,—

“Surely that is the horn at the drawbridge.”

“Rather late for a visitor,” said Mr. Carington.

“A knight-errant,” said Raffaella. “It will be charming. You are all pairing off in a commonplace way, and no one ever says a word of courtesy to me. I am neglected. I have a feeling of instinct that the man who blew that horn is my knight-errant.”

“It was somebody's coachman, Raffaella, depend on it,” said Mr. Carington. “Don't make any rash vows, for fear. You wouldn't like to be pledged to marry a groom.”

“Who can be coming here to-night?” said Elinor.

“What can it matter to you and me?” asked Frank. “The Earl may have asked the Lord Chancellor or the Prime Minister, or some other profoundly oppressive party. There are plenty of beds in the house, and there is plenty of wine. Give them some wine, and send them to bed; that's my notion. We are not to be interrupted.”

“Frank, my boy,” says Mr. Carington, “you are equal to anything to-day. We all know why. Little Elinor blushes, I see. Raffaella is so nearly asleep that her opinion is not worth asking.”

“Am I asleep?” cried the Marchesa, sharply. “Franky, you are a libeller. I am wider awake than I have been for a thousand years.”

“This is a wakeful evening, when one is full of fun from sunset to sunrise. It is one of those electric nights when one expects something to happen. Something *will* happen, I know.”

At this moment a door was thrown open in the Hall, and a footman said,—

“MR. DELAMERE.”

(*To be continued.*)

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THE OWL'S NEST IN THE CITY.

CHAPTER XII.

"If we do meet again, why we shall smile;
If not, why then this parting was well made."—SHAKESPEARE.

"Fire that is closest kept burns most of all."—*Ibid.*

POOR Dick sat silent and with head bowed down during Miss McGregor's recital of this sad history, every word of which, whether relating to the past or the present, must have been exquisitely painful to him. When she concluded, he again thanked her for her championship of his sister, and then said, "Can any of you give me any clue, however slight, by which to trace her? My first duty now is to seek her out and bring her here, so that she may be under this dear lady's safeguard and protection."

"Pardon me, Cornet Prescott," said Miss McGregor, rising haughtily, "that is a charge I cannot undertake. I shall have done my duty when I have placed your mother's will in your hands. I hope sincerely, for your sake, that you may succeed in detaching your sister from her present course of life; but it is utterly impossible that I should lend my support or countenance to her in any way. I intend to return at once to Scotland. It is really not to be expected," she added, seeing Dick about to speak, "that I should remain under the same roof with Miss Prescott after what has occurred."

"For God's sake do not say so," said Dick, eagerly; "remember her position; she is worse than an orphan; you are her only female relation, and if you forsake her—for one fault—who can save her?"

"Sir, it is not *my* duty to save her. I, who have lived all my life far removed from the very breath of contamination, am in no way responsible for her."

"Dear madam," said I, "surely some responsibility weighs upon all those who were instrumental in forcing on that fatal marriage, which has brought nothing but misery and wretchedness to all concerned. I know that the world's judgment goes with you in these

things ; but for us, who have seen the results face to face, is there no other view ? have there not been enough victims already to what, after all, was not family virtue, but family pride ?" And I looked meaningly at Dick.

Her glance followed mine, and she replied uneasily, "I do not defend the course taken on that occasion. I do not deny that I have repented my share in bringing about that unhappy marriage, since I have been an eye-witness to the misery it has produced ; but that is no reason——"

"Yes, yes, it is a reason for pity at least, if not for absolution," said Dick. "Ask yourself, dear madam,—if my poor sister had been brought up in a happy home, the loved and cherished daughter of parents loving and honouring each other, would she have come to this ? I do not presume to speak to you either of responsibility or duty ; it is charity, Christian charity. I implore you," he added, kneeling down before her and gently taking both her hands, "on my knees I implore you to save her."

Miss McGregor was silent.

"Upon my life, Dick's in the right, madam," said St. John ; "it is a case of Christian charity ; I am a very poor hand at religion, but hang it, you know, we are all Christians. Don't you say yourself now, that you are not satisfied with your own part in bringing all this mischief about ? Well, then, does not our Saviour say that unless we are quite clear ourselves, we have no business to be pitching stones at other people ? Oh, I dare say I am not exactly right as to the words," he continued, seeing Miss McGregor looked somewhat disturbed at this new reading ; "I know very well I'm no parson, but the deuce is in it if that is not the idea."

"Yes, Captain St. John, that is the idea," said Miss McGregor very gravely, "and I begin to be afraid you are a better Christian than myself. Cornet Prescott, I *will* wait here, and I will receive and strive to teach your poor sister to the best of my humble power."

Dick kissed her hand with passionate gratitude as he rose from his knees, but he did not speak. I think he could not. There was a pause of a few moments, after which he said again,—

"Has anyone any clue ?"

"I fear I have," I answered, reluctantly ; and I then related as mild a version as possible of Miss Prescott's flirtation with the gentleman who had been in the habit of meeting her at chapel, and also the far more significant fact of my having seen them walking together arm in arm, on the very day of our departure for T——. "That young man first saw her at the chapel," I said, "so he is probably a Catholic, and, if so, Father Louis might help us to discover his name."

"Beauchamp of the ——th is a Catholic," said St. John, "and I have often heard him talk of going with some of his friends to high mass at that very chapel, because there were always so many pretty

girls there. Now that Lovel is here, we may safely leave Miss McGregor, Dick," he continued ; "so if you like, I'll go and see after Beauchamp, while you find out Father Louis, and after that we can meet at my rooms and compare notes."

This plan was at once agreed upon. I was able to give a most minute personal description of one upon whom my jealous, angry eyes had so often been fixed ; and I also remembered that upon one occasion I had seen him leave the chapel in a very elegant carriage, and that the servants' livery was so peculiar that I could describe it exactly.

"If we find out where they are," said Dick, "I shall follow them at once, wherever it may be ; so good-bye, Ned."

He shook hands with Miss McGregor and me, with even more than his usual warmth, and then turned to leave the room. Was it only an affectionate impulse, or was it presentiment, that caused him suddenly to turn back at the door and kiss me ? I have often thanked God since, for that last kiss.

"I shall stick by him, you know," said St. John ; "and I'll take care to let you know our doings."

We both thanked him heartily for the promise, and felt much relieved to think Dick would have the comfort of his society and sympathy.

Two or three moments later, we saw them cross the court together. St. John looked back, and waved his hand encouragingly to us ; but Dick passed out of sight under the dark archway without looking round.

Miss McGregor and I remained standing at the window without speaking, oppressed with sad memories and sad forebodings, from which we were roused by the unexpected entrance of old Withers, with the eternal broom. She came close up to us as if she had something to say, and then turned away again without speaking, and moved towards the door. Miss McGregor glanced uneasily at me, as if for an explanation, but seeing I had none to give, said,—

"Well, Betty Withers, have you anything to say ?"

"Didn't neither of you notice nothing particular about Dick ?" said Withers.

"Nothing," said Miss McGregor ; "unless indeed you mean, in the midst of such affliction, his remarkable calmness and self-command."

"Remarkable fiddlestick," said the old woman, testily ; "I tell you that quietness ain't in nature."

"What do you mean, Withers ?" said I.

"Mean ! I mean that ain't our Dick, that ain't ; if they was the last words I had to speak, I tell you you've seen the dead alive." So saying she left the room.

"Really, Mr. Lovel, we must get some other person in the house as servant," said Miss McGregor. "I begin to be afraid there may have been some truth in what Mr. Earle said. Perhaps the old woman

does really drink ; did you notice how very strange she looked just now, and how pale ?”

“I think she does indulge a little at times,” replied I, with a guilty recollection of the black teapot ; “but I will go downstairs and speak to some of the clerks about sending in a proper person to wait upon you. It is a great pity Mr. Earle sent away the girl that was here.”

I found that one of the under clerks had a sister who would be glad to come and wait on Miss McGregor for the liberal wages I offered, and having sent him to fetch her, I returned and sat for some time with Miss McGregor in the deserted sitting-room. I remember that we each of us took up a book, though I do not think either of us read much.

Day rapidly declined, but the darkness that came upon us could not add much to the gloom of our thoughts, and neither of us offered to light the lamp. At length Miss McGregor broke the oppressive silence by saying, “It is nearly two hours past dinner time ; had you not better ring ?”

Feeling for the handle of the bell in the dark, I rang so loudly, without intending it, that the bell sounded through the house like an alarm. It was not answered, however, and I rang again.

Still no Betty Withers appeared. I felt my old nervousness coming over me, and I am almost ashamed to relate that, unwilling to go upstairs alone in search of the delinquent, I said to Miss McGregor, “Shall we go and see what is the matter ?”

Perhaps she herself preferred company at that moment, for she rose directly, lighted a candle, and, putting it into my hands, drew her shawl round her ready to follow.

How silent and ghostly the old house seemed I cannot say. “Let us look after my uncle first,” I said, less, I fear, from benevolence towards him than from a cowardly wish to delay going up the darksome stairs. We opened the door of his room. It really seemed almost cheerful in comparison with the rest of the house. My poor uncle was placidly smoking his pipe by the side of the fire, and a tray of meat and wine was by his side.

“Have you dined, uncle ?” I said, in some surprise.

“Hours and hours ago,” he replied. “I have been hard at work ever since,” he added, smiling (not a paper or pen had been touched), “and I shall have everything quite ready by the time James comes home.”

“That’s right !” I answered, relieved to be met with a smile, however imbecile, in that mournful dwelling, over which a curse appeared to hang. Miss McGregor stood waiting for me at the half-open door. Something of my own nervousness appeared to affect even her, though usually so composed and strong-minded, for drawing her shawl round her with a sort of shudder, she said, “Upon my word it seems as if the happiest fate that can befall one in this place is to turn silly.”

"My uncle certainly looks happier now than I ever remember him, but——"

Miss McGregor suddenly clutched my arm as I spoke, and uttered a low cry of terror. One of the uncomfortable panel doors, of the existence of which she was ignorant, opened, and Mr. Earle unexpectedly stood before us in the opening.

He seemed surprised to see us there, but he bowed politely to Miss McGregor, and said,—

"I have ventured to return for the sake of the business, for hearing that Dick had gone, I felt I should be safe."

"Safe!" retorted I; "you are certainly safe enough from everything but contempt."

"These are harsh words, Ned, towards one who at least never did you any harm, though you did not scruple to play the spy on him," he answered, coldly.

"Oh! if you would like to see some of your handiwork, you have only to look here," said I, opening the door of Mr. Prescott's room again.

Earle advanced a step forward, and fixed his eyes earnestly on my uncle, who was leaning back in his chair gazing at the fire, and softly rubbing his hands, the very picture of contented imbecility.

Presently he raised his eyes, and on seeing his partner standing in the doorway, he said to him in a tone of voice and manner the very reverse of his former gloomy and morose bearing: "Ah, Earle, how do you do? I am hard at work, you see; the documents are nearly ready, and you will be surprised to see the start things will take when James comes back. He will soon set everything to rights."

"Good God! this is dreadful indeed," said Earle, in a low voice. "How long has he been like this?"

"Ever since the funeral."

"Then how dare you say it is my work!" he exclaimed, fiercely.

"All the misery and wretchedness in this wretched house is your work," I answered, turning away from him. "Now, madam, shall we go upstairs?" I said to Miss McGregor.

She took my arm in silence, and we went upstairs, and passed the dark doorways of the empty rooms that used so to awe me when I was a child, together. The kitchen fire was out, but by the light of our candle we saw old Withers sitting in her accustomed chair, with the teapot I knew so well by her side. Her mouth and eyes were wide open; the black cap lay upon the ground by her side, and a few elf locks of long tangled grey hair straggled upon her shoulders in forlorn and pitiful disorder. I spoke to her twice, but received no answer. Miss McGregor then went forward and touched her.

"My God, she is stone cold!" she exclaimed. "Can she be dead?"

"She is dead, indeed," said Mr. Earle, who had followed us; "and I should think," he added, taking the old woman's rigid hand in his,

"that she must have been dead some hours. When did you last see her?"

"Oh! at least four hours ago," answered Miss McGregor, looking at her watch.

"Do you remember her last words?" I whispered.

"I do, indeed," she said, shuddering; "but we must not be superstitious, Mr. Lovel."

At this moment we were startled by a loud ringing at the outer door of the upper hall, and on going downstairs to answer it, we found St. John's groom waiting with a letter for me.

While Mr. Earle went to seek for a surgeon to certify as to the cause of old Withers' death, and to make arrangements for the decent removal of the body, I took the letter from the servant, and desiring him to wait, followed Miss McGregor into the sitting-room to read its contents. It was evidently written in great haste, and was as follows:—

"DEAR NED,

"I have found it all out, through Beauchamp. It was the fellow you suspected, Viscount L——. They have gone to Italy; Beauchamp thinks to Nice, but it will be very easy to find out. We are off by the mail train, as, of course, Dick must either make him marry her, or fight him. I will write again through Johnson when I have anything to say.

"Get Miss M. away from X Court, for if Earle finds out that Dick's gone, she won't be safe. I have told Johnson to consider himself her servant till I get back.

"Yours ever,

"B. ST JOHN."

I put the letter into Miss McGregor's hands, but she had only read the first lines when she let it fall in dismay, and sinking on the sofa with a face as pale as death, exclaimed,—

"Oh, Mr. Lovel, this is worse than all! There is not an instant to be lost; you must follow them at once to prevent this dreadful duel."

"It is dreadful, indeed, that Dick should risk his life for one so utterly unworthy of it," I said; "but indeed, dear madam, there is no help for it. As St. John says, he must fight."

"No, no,—it is not that, it is not the danger—though Heaven knows that is dreadful enough. God help us all, they are brothers! Viscount L—— is Lord M.'s son. Would you have Dick fight his own brother? and for his sister, too? Oh! it is too horrible!"

For a moment I stood speechless: my senses appeared to forsake me, and I scarcely realised the full meaning of her words. I was roused by the entrance of Mr. Earle, and Miss McGregor, who had not read that part of St. John's letter which related to him, started up and putting it into his hands, said: "You must find a means of

stopping this duel. If there be murder between these brothers, their blood will be upon your head."

Even Earle turned pale as he read the letter.

"It is not too late—Lovel must go after them at once," he said, "and tell them the truth. But they may not believe it on our bare word. You must get a line to Viscount L—— from Lord M—— himself. If you tell him all the facts, and who *all* the parties are," he added, with his old sneer, "his affectionate and paternal heart will surely render him anxious to prevent further mischief—not to speak of the scandal, for *we* would take care to make the thing known. It would only be poetical justice, though, to let his punishment fall upon him through Dick," he said, smiling grimly.

"Who can tell that Dick himself would not be the victim?" said I. "God knows he has always been so hitherto, thanks to you."

"Mr. Lovel, do not let us lose time in reproaches," said Miss McGregor. "Let us both go at once to Lord M——. Is there no blue book in the house to look out his address?"

"St. John's man is pretty sure to know where he lives," said I, calling him in.

He knew that it was in Curzon Street, and said he could point out the house though he could not remember the number. I therefore sent him at once for a cab, in which Miss McGregor and I started immediately for Mayfair. Johnson, who had evidently taken his master's orders about Miss McGregor to heart, mounted the box.

On arriving at Lord M——'s, we found the house brilliantly lighted up, and the porter who opened the door assured us that it was quite impossible we could see the earl that night, as he was entertaining a large party of friends at dinner.

"I do not intend to go away without seeing him," said Miss McGregor with imperturbable dignity. "Send word to his lordship that we have bad news to give him. Viscount L—— is in great danger."

After hesitating a moment longer, the man showed us into the library and said, "As soon as ever I can speak to the butler, madam, I will see what can be done."

"We are in no hurry," replied Miss McGregor, seating herself with the air of an empress; "but for the earl's own sake, you had better not lose any time."

The man bowed and left us.

We had formed no plan together as to who should speak, nor what we were to say, but from the moment we entered the house Miss McGregor had shown herself so decidedly the master spirit, that I instinctively left the whole matter in her hands.

It may have been a quarter of an hour, it seemed to me an age before Lord M—— came into the library. I was very anxious to see him, and eagerly looked to trace some resemblance to Dick. He was a tall handsome man, still in the prime of life, and physically there was

certainly a striking likeness between them, but the expression of Lord M——'s face was cold, selfish, and reserved. He appeared annoyed at what he probably thought an intrusion, but he bowed slightly to Miss McGregor, as he said: "My servant tells me you have something to communicate with regard to my son, Viscount L——. May I request you to state it in as few words as possible, as I am much engaged?"

"I am here, my lord, to give you the means of, it may be, saving the life of Viscount L——,"—the earl started—"and to do this, I must claim for a few moments your best attention."

"I am at your service, madam," he answered, taking a chair.

Miss McGregor then related her story in a few simple, severe words, and the earl, though he never lost his self-possession, evidently listened with painful interest.

"This is indeed a most unhappy business," he said, at length. "Of course I will give this gentleman—since he is good enough to undertake the journey—the letter you require, to put an end to this foolish affair. The danger to the unfortunate young man in whom you are interested is even greater than you suppose. My boy is a first-rate shot."

"To which of your lordship's boys does your lordship allude?" said Miss McGregor, coldly.

The earl bit his lip, but did not reply. He seated himself at his desk, and in a few moments wrote a letter to Viscount L——, which he put into my hands. We then rose to depart, and with more of feeling in his tone than I had yet detected, Lord M——, said: "Whatever be the motive for your interference in this matter, allow me to thank you for having thus placed it in my power to prevent further mischief."

"You have nothing to thank me for, my lord," said I; "your lordship's interest in this matter is for Viscount L——; my interest is exclusively concentrated upon your lordship's *eldest* son."

The earl rang the bell without answering this thrust, and bowed haughtily to Miss McGregor as we left the room, without bestowing any further notice on me.

When we were again seated in the cab, St. John's servant touched his hat to Miss McGregor, and said: "My master desired me to advise you to sleep at the —— Hotel to-night, madam: shall I tell the man to drive there?"

I earnestly entreated Miss McGregor to agree to this arrangement, for I felt the truth of St. John's words that she was not safe at X Court. She unwillingly consented, and after leaving her at the hotel, I returned home with Johnson in order to send her her boxes. We took a sad farewell of each other, for I was to start at seven the next morning.

X Court appeared but little more gloomy for the presence of death within its walls. Full as my mind was of uneasiness on Dick's account, I could not but reflect with mournful commiseration

tion on the dreary, joyless life and unwept death of poor old Withers. She had been ignorantly faithful and true to her employers, and, in her rough way, kind to us lads. She had done her duty according to her lights, and I felt remorseful to think that neither prayer nor blessing had been breathed by the side of the lonely corpse.

I determined to conquer the nervous horror that oppressed me, and strive to utter a prayer over the forsaken remains. The body had been laid out and was already placed in a shell. The poor old woman's grey hair had been decently combed under a snowy cap, and the still white features, from which all the unlovely lines traced by care and labour had vanished, had assumed that ineffable expression of peace and holiness which belongs only to death. The remembrance of my own loved but long-forgotten mother's death-bed came upon me, and with it, as if by enchantment, the words of the simple prayer she had taught me to repeat on the anniversaries of my father's death. I fell upon my knees and prayed fervently for the first and last time in X Court. Then kissing the poor old woman's cold forehead, I left her alone with "easeful death."

CHAPTER XIII.

"There was resemblance such as true blood wears,
And now to see them thus divided stand
In fixed ferocity."—BYRON.

"Past hope, and in despair ; that way past grace."—SHAKESPEARE.

EVEN if I had the memory, I should not have the heart to dwell upon any of the incidents of that journey from London to Nice. In consequence, no doubt, of my utter inexperience, and of my physical infirmity, it was even more painful and fatiguing than I had anticipated ; but the anxiety I suffered lest I should not arrive in time rendered every other distress or discomfort light in comparison. Even the exquisite loveliness of the scenery, of which I was vaguely conscious, was oppressive to me ; the serenity of that heavenly sea and sky was in too painful contrast with the tumult of my own thoughts.

I had no difficulty in tracing Viscount L——; he had evidently not sought concealment, and had stopped *en route* at the best hotels. When I reached the Hôtel de L'Ecu d'Or at Nice, however, I learned that he had taken the Villa S——, about six miles away from the town, if my memory serve me right.

I met no trace of St. John and Dick, however, and was compelled to come to the conclusion that they had taken a different route. Even when I reached Nice, I could not find their names in the strangers' book at any of the hotels. At length when I remembered

the purpose of their journey, it occurred to me as possible that they might have thought it wiser to travel under assumed names, and I therefore decided that the wisest course for me to adopt, would be to proceed at once to the Villa S——, and endeavour to see Miss Prescott. If they had not made their appearance there, I was still in time ; and I might, by warning her, prevent the catastrophe I so dreaded from taking place ; at any rate if Viscount L—— and Dick had met, she must know it, and could give me all the details.

Having determined to put this plan in execution forthwith, I ordered the commissioner of the Ecu d'Or to get me a chaise with fast horses, in order to proceed to the Villa S——. While I was impatiently waiting in the court-yard of the hotel a carriage drove up to the door, and to my inexpressible relief, Miss Prescott herself descended from it, and was already asking information of the concierge with regard to the packets for Marseilles, when I hurried up to her with such unfeigned delight, that although she certainly appeared much surprised and coloured violently at the sight of me, she was very gracious, and smiled as sweet and bewitching a smile as ever at my agitation and excitement, the cause of which she undoubtedly mistook.

"Good God, how delighted I am to have found you !" I exclaimed ; "but I have something of the utmost importance to say to you. Can I not see you for a moment alone ?"

She ordered the waiters to show her an apartment, and to bring refreshments, with the air of a queen, and then turning to me, said, "Now, Mr. Lovel, what is this tremendously important news ? Are you quite sure I do not know it already ?"

"What ! have you then seen Dick ?"

"Yes, indeed, I have seen too much of Dick," she answered, pettishly ; then, seeing my look of astonishment and annoyance, she added, "Really, Mr. Lovel, I do hope you have not come all the way to Nice merely to sing hymns to Dick, as you used to do in X Court ; for I can assure you, I am less than ever in the humour to listen to them. He has behaved here in the most absurd and unjustifiable manner, and has done all he could to spoil the good news he brought of my being restored to my rightful position and property."

I was confounded at first by the attack, but after a moment's pause, I said : "But did he not tell you you are his sister ?"

"His *half*-sister you mean,—yes ; and he certainly endeavoured to prove his relationship by rendering himself as rude and disagreeable as only relations can be. But, do not let us talk of these disagreeables ; look at this exquisite blue sea and sky ; I declare I almost regret leaving it for gloomy England, even though it be to claim my rights."

"Forgive me, Miss Prescott," I said ; "I am most unwilling, believe me, to talk of 'disagreeables,' but anxiety for my cousin's safety compels me to ask you whether he has seen Viscount L——."

"Seen him? Why, of course! Was not the sole object of his coming here to seek him out for the purpose of insulting him? And most thoroughly he fulfilled his mission, adding a little agreeable by-play of insults to me."

"Insults! Oh, Miss Prescott!—he whose only thought was of saving you."

"Saving me!" she answered, angrily. "Pray, Mr. Lovel, do not imagine that I intend to submit to a *réchauffé* of Dick's insolence from you. My half-brother's coarseness and violence have separated me from Viscount L—— precisely when—had he used a little politeness and discretion—circumstances might have united us for life. That mischief, however, is over; but I am at least my own mistress, and equally independent of half-brothers and *cousins*; so I will submit to no more rudeness from either."

So saying she moved to ring the bell, but I—too unhappy on Dick's account to care for her displeasure—seized her hand, saying: "I am going, madam; all I ask is that you will tell me where to find Dick; it is a matter of life and death."

"Nonsense, Mr. Lovel; pray do not be so excessively melodramatic. It really does not suit our prosaic nineteenth century. Your matter of life and death is most probably settled long ago, and *honour is satisfied*," she added, with a pretty little sneer—"without a scratch on either side."

"Oh, my God!" I exclaimed in despair, "do you mean that they have fought already?"

"I mean that they were breathing fire and fury when I left them; but Viscount L—— had still to procure a second. Dick had that silly young St. John with him—so that perhaps life and death are yet trembling in the balance."

"Great Heaven! how can you laugh?"

"My dear, dramatic Mr. Lovel, during the short time I was in Paris there were several affairs of life and death in our circle, and the very worst results were an arm in a sling for a short time. The combatants always showed unexampled valour, of course, until the seconds interposed and declared honour was satisfied, after which the gentlemen shook hands and were adored as heroes by all the ladies of their circle, until the next affair of life and death caused them to be forgotten."

"You know nothing of Dick, Miss Prescott;—but tell me quickly, where were they to meet—"

"Somewhere in the grounds of the Villa S—— I suppose. They are quite large, overgrown, and deserted enough to allow of fifty affairs of life and death at the same time—"

I turned from her without answering, and bidding the commissioner tell the coachman I would make his fortune if we were in time, I sprang into the carriage that was waiting for me, and in less than half an hour the panting horses drew up at the Villa S——.

The place looked utterly deserted. The huge iron gates were unfastened, and we eagerly pushed them open and entered the grass-grown courtyard, from whence a handsome flight of marble steps led up to the terrace upon which the villa stood. On the road I had explained the object of my anxiety to the commissioner, and he recommended me not to waste time by entering the house—duels, he said, were never fought in houses,—and he suggested that the driver, himself, and I, should all search the grounds in different directions, and the first to find traces of the combatants should whistle as loudly as he could for the others, and hasten on to bid the seconds stop the proceedings.

Forgetting my lameness, I ran on and on, now through vine-trellised shady walks, now through quaintly disposed open spaces with broken marble fountains or statues in the centre ; up and down lordly terraces, grass-grown and neglected ; dimly conscious of the elegant and luxuriant decay so characteristic of the old villas of Italy, —one moment starting off with the fresh energy of hope, and the next almost breaking down with fatigue and despair. I was nearly spent, when, as I emerged from under a sort of bower of oleanders, bent and twined to overshadow a fountain which had ceased to play, I came suddenly in sight of the objects of my search.

They were standing upon a raised terrace still far off, but I saw them all so distinctly through the clear Italian air, that I could recognise each from the other, and plainly discern their movements.

No ; I was not too late—evidently the seconds were measuring the ground. Dick, easily distinguished from the rest by his superior height, was standing a little apart. His antagonist appeared to be talking—I fancied even laughing—with a gentleman who held something under his arm—the surgeon, of course.

I shouted as loudly as I could, but I was very breathless ; they did not hear me. I waved my pocket handkerchief, but I was upon much lower ground ; they did not see me.

I leaned for a moment against the wall near me to recover my strength for another effort ; for I was dreadfully exhausted, and nearly fainting with the pain my long run had produced in my lame leg. It then struck me that it was precisely because I had been sheltering myself from the sun by running in the shadow of this wall, that I had failed to attract their attention. As this idea occurred to me, I once more raised my eyes to the group on the terrace, and saw St. John in the act of handing a pistol to Dick. The sight gave me strength—I started out into the hot sunlight, and waving my handkerchief upon the end of my stick, with a last effort, I shrieked rather than shouted St. John's name.

They heard me ! I saw them all turn round to look ; I saw Dick's angry and impatient gesture ; I saw the seconds speak for one moment together, and then run down the steps of the terrace towards me. After that I saw no more, for I fell on the ground fainting, utterly overcome with pain and emotion.

The next thing of which I was conscious was St. John's voice asking me what had brought me. I gasped out, "Oh, St. John!—oh, sir," turning to the other second, who was helping me to rise, "for the love of God, stop them! they must not fight!"

"Not fight!" exclaimed St. John; "are you mad, Ned?—there is no help for it—they must fight now."

"Indeed, sir, we have done everything that could be done," said the gentleman upon whose arm I was leaning, and whose name I afterwards learned was Captain Paulett, "and now we cannot allow you to interfere. We should be unwilling to use force, but unless you retire at once——"

"Stop, sir, hear me out. I have a letter for Viscount L——; only let me give him that letter, and if he insists upon fighting Cornet Prescott after he has read it, I give you my word of honour I will neither say nor do more to interfere."

Captain Paulett looked at St. John, who said, "I think we ought to allow him to give the letter to L——. I will answer for Mr. Lovel's keeping his word."

"Yes, yes! it is a duty, you must let him have it," I said, taking advantage of Paulett's hesitation, to hurry forward. They followed in silence, evidently vanquished by my earnestness, but dissatisfied. I ran on, and thrust the letter into Viscount L——'s hands; he and the surgeon were staring at us in mute astonishment; but Dick, to whom I turned, eager to embrace him, drew back from me, and said reproachfully, "Oh, Ned, Ned! I never thought you would have done this."

At this moment an exclamation from the viscount caused us both to turn round and look at him. His hand trembled, he was very pale, and after fixing his eyes on Dick for a moment with an indescribable expression, he put the letter into the second's hands, saying in a low voice, "Settle it as you can; I cannot fight him." He then turned away. St. John and Paulett glanced rapidly over the letter, and then looked at one another with faces full of dismay. At length Captain Paulett advanced to Dick, and said, "Cornet Prescott, this affair cannot go on. My principal deeply regrets the unhappy circumstances that led to the challenge, but he has received a communication from his father which renders it impossible the matter should be settled as we had proposed; he therefore——"

"He therefore is a coward, as well as a villain," said Dick, in whose crimson brow I read the idea that the viscount refused to fight with him in consequence of the stigma attached to his birth.

Viscount L——'s eye flashed fire, and his pale cheek flushed, as he angrily faced round upon Dick, and at that moment the likeness between the two brothers was striking; then recollecting himself, he drew back again, saying, "I cannot fight him."

Dick sprang forward with uplifted arm, evidently determined to force him to fight, by striking him in our presence. St. John and

Paulett both threw themselves upon him and seized his arm ; but Dick, who was naturally far stronger than either, and whose strength was now redoubled by fury, would soon have thrown them both from him, had not St. John exclaimed to me,—

“ Give him the letter.”

I snatched it up from the ground, where it had fallen in the struggle, and holding it towards Dick, cried, “ Read it, Dick ! it is from your *father*.”

The words acted like a spell. He instantly ceased the struggle, eagerly grasped the letter, read it, and let it fall without speaking. His flushed and angry features turned white as stone. He turned his eyes on the viscount, who was standing apart with his head bowed down, with an expression of mingled pain and hatred I shall never forget ; then turning away, with a strange, shivering sigh, said, “ *He* my brother ; O God, it is too much ! ”

He reeled like a drunken man as he spoke the words, and had not St. John and Paulett supported him, he must certainly have fallen.

There was a silence of a few moments which none of us dared to break. At length Viscount L—— raised his head, and beckoning me to go to him, said in a hoarse and broken voice : “ But, sir, the lady,—for God’s sake tell me the truth ; he said she was his sister : she is not, she cannot, be my father’s child.”

“ No.”

“ Thank God ! ” he said with a deep sigh of relief, and wiping the perspiration from his pale face : “ the whole thing was so sudden, so strange ; I felt,—that is, I fancied,—really I was quite unmanned.”

While Captain Paulett explained to the bewildered surgeon that his services would not be wanted, as there would be no duel, St. John joined Viscount L—— and me, saying : “ He has asked me to leave him alone for a few moments, poor fellow.” I looked round, and saw that Dick had walked away and was leaning against a tree some distance off.

“ But I don’t quite like your leaving him, St. John,” said I.

“ He begged me to do so.”

“ This is all very dreadful,” said the viscount, “ but it is not so bad as I feared. If we all swear to keep the thing a secret, perhaps in time things will come right. It is deuced disagreeable to be so hated by one’s own father’s son.”

“ Then you had better do justice to his sister,” said St. John, bluntly.

Viscount L—— did not answer.

“ Don’t you think we might go to him now, St. John ? ” I said, looking at Dick ; “ his thoughts must be so very bitter.”

“ He made me promise to give him ten minutes to come to himself,” said St. John, looking at his watch ; “ besides, you see he is quite calm, he is writing something.”

“ Gentlemen,” said the surgeon, advancing, and addressing us in French, “ since I find from Captain Paulett that all is happily at an

end, I will, if you please, return to my patients, for I see my services will not be——”

He was interrupted by the report of a pistol.

“My God, your friend has shot himself!” he exclaimed, seizing his case of instruments and running towards Dick. We all rushed with him to the spot, and St. John, reaching first, raised his dear head from the ground. A stream of blood flowed from his mouth and nostrils while the surgeon hastily began cutting away the breast of his coat.

“Dick, dear Dick!” I cried in despair, seizing his hands.

There was no responsive pressure; nor was there any answering look from his fixed and glazing eyes.

After two minutes, during which we all held our breath in agonised suspense, the surgeon motioned to St. John to lay him down, saying: “It is no use, gentlemen, the ball has passed through the lungs; he is quite dead.”

“There’s a paper in his left hand,” said Paulett, with difficulty unclasping the rigid fingers, and handing it to St. John, who read it as well as he could through his tears, and then gave it to me. It was as follows:—

“Dear Ned and St. John. Forgive me. I cannot help it. God bless you both. Be good to her.”

My tears fell fast upon the paper. I could not speak. My senses seemed to be leaving me as I looked down on all I held dear in this world a corpse at my feet.

At length I was roused to a more complete sense of my misery by seeing Captain Paulett, the surgeon, and St. John lifting the body to carry it to the carriage they had in waiting at some distance from the Villa S——. Viscount L—— approached to bear his share in the burthen, but St. John said, “No, Ned must come; you have no right; this is as much your work as if you had fired the pistol yourself.”

The young man shrank away without answering, and I took his place.

We carried him to Nice in silence. Captain Paulett and Dr. C—— undertook to inform the authorities of the occurrence. There was no difficulty in proving a suicide testified to by so many respectable witnesses. Viscount L—— left Nice immediately after the funeral, which he attended in spite of St. John, who did not scruple to tell him he had no business there.

As for me, the fatigue, excitement, and grief I had undergone, acting upon a physique so weak by nature, threw me into a fever, from which I only recovered after many months, thanks to the skill and attention of Dr. C——, to whose care St. John was obliged to leave me, as he considered it a duty, in fulfilment of Dick’s last words, “Be good to her,” to accompany his sister to England and see her safely settled in Miss McGregor’s care, until she were placed in possession of her property.

When I was sufficiently recovered to read the letters St. John had written to me after his arrival in England, I learned that she had shown more feeling than he had expected at the news of her brother's death, and had expressed her intention of living with Miss McGregor, as a proof of respect for his wishes. These good resolutions did not last long, however, and scarcely two months after Miss Prescott took possession of her estate the two ladies parted in anger, never to meet again. I learned with surprise afterwards that Miss Prescott had made friends with her uncle, and that the two were living in apparent harmony at B—— Grange.

St. John attributed this to Earle's having traded upon some ugly rumours which had got about with regard to Miss Prescott's connection with Viscount L——, to persuade her that the presence and protection of her nearest relation were necessary to her reputation. My poor uncle was conveyed to a private lunatic asylum, where St. John went to see him, and found him peaceful and contented, and engaged as usual in preparing the articles of partnership for his son's entry into the then extinct firm of Prescott and Earle. There were letters also from Earle himself to me, asking my instructions as to the disposal of my own property, which had been well administered by my uncle, and now amounted to a considerable sum. Having an invincible repugnance to the idea of returning to London, where, since St. John's regiment had been ordered to Malta, I had neither relation nor friend, save my poor insane uncle, I left the investment of my money in Mr. Earle's hands, and to do him justice, I must say I had no reason to repent the trust I reposed in him. Miss McGregor had, I think, spoken the truth when she said that in the matter of B—— Grange he had really persuaded himself that he was justified in endeavouring to regain by fraud, a property of which he believed himself to have been illegally and unjustly deprived.

I have but little more to tell. Dick's death had made life a blank to me, and for five long years I wandered over Europe, aimless, and nearly always alone: friendless, useless, and conscious of the waste of my existence, yet lacking alike the moral and physical energy to render it worthier.

One day, at Genoa, I read in an old number of *Galignani's Messenger*, which had been left behind by a passing traveller, a rather long account of a duel fought between two Englishmen, at Brussels, in which both were wounded, one in the face, and the other in the arm. The initials only were given; but I felt certain that the adversaries were St. John and Viscount L——.

The account concluded by saying that one of the gentlemen engaged, an officer, had since returned to England, in consequence of the death of his elder brother, by which he had become heir to a large estate and the title of baronet.

As I knew the name of St. John's father's estate, I wrote a letter addressed to him there, which he answered by return of post, giving

me so cordial an invitation to England, that my heart swelled within me to think I had one friend in the world still. I started the same night, and in less than a week I arrived at W—— Park. I found St. John absolutely unchanged by his accession to fortune. The future baronet sucked his stick as pertinaciously as ever the captain of the Guards had done. I noticed, however, that he still wore his arm in a sling. But it was not until the next day, when we strolled out alone together for a country walk, that I was able to speak freely to him of old times, and to ask him, "How came you to fight Viscount L——?"

"I'll be d——d if I know! Because I couldn't help it, somehow. I met him quite by chance at a dinner given by Russell of ours, who had just won a lot of money at Homburg. Perhaps I had had too much wine, perhaps he had. I know I hated the very sight of him, and I contradicted everything he said till he couldn't stand it; and next morning, when we had to fight about it, neither of us knew which had challenged the other. But, of course, neither of us would apologise even then, when we were cool. I got this thrust in my arm and have been disabled ever since, but I didn't care a damn, for my sword flew up and gave him such an ugly slash across the nose that I don't think he'll seduce many more young ladies from the paths of virtue." And St. John laughed heartily.

As he spoke, a handsome carriage and pair dashed through the narrow lane in which we were walking, splashing us with mud from head to foot.

"It is very ungentlemanlike to allow one's coachman to drive at that rate through such narrow lanes," said I, very angrily.

"You would be more angry than you are, if you knew who it was," said St. John.

"Why, who is it?"

"*Squire Earle*; this is his land; that white house yonder is B—— Grange."

"*Squire Earle*! *his* land! what has become of Miss Prescott then?"

"Oh! she died, poor thing, of consumption, last year. So you see he need not have plotted and schemed so hard. It has all fallen to him at last."

"And to think of poor, dear Dick lying in his lonely grave at Nice!" I exclaimed. "Ah, St. John, I often think of poor old Withers's words—'this ain't justice.'"

"Oh! come now, damn it," said St. John, "who would not rather be Dick?"

"That's true," said I; "but it's cold comfort."

I looked at St. John for an answer, but he was sucking his stick.

THE END.

LORD BYRON AND HIS TIMES.

(Continued from p. 577.)

—+—
“Sorrow seems half of his immortality.”—*Cain*.

IN two of Mr. Robert Browning's recent works, he attacks Byron with a strange fury that seems to me far less psychologically discriminating than might have been expected from him. He pokes fun at Byron's slip of “lay” for “lie” in the deservedly celebrated passage of *Childe Harold* about the sea—a slip which Shelley also makes in his splendid lines on the “Apennine.” We have heard a good deal about this in the newspapers, and it is all very well there; for Byron was apt to be careless and rude in diction as well as in rhythm; but it seems a little strange for Mr. Browning (of whose genius I am a very warm admirer) to pitch into him on this score, his own language being as difficult to construe as the French of Rabelais, or the German of Hegel and Böhme. However the *substance* of the passage is his grand object of attack. In “Hohenstiel-Schwangau” he denies apparently that Byron was a worshipper of Nature at all; in “Fifine” he argues that to exalt Nature so highly as Byron does is false philosophy. He affirms, however, that in his admiration for the sea and mountains Byron was insincere, and only meant to attract attention to himself as an admirer of the sea more than other men, using the sea merely as convenient for “hitching into a stanza.” In the latter work he argues (if I rightly comprehend him) that the sea and mountains, &c., are themselves constituted by what we men please to think and feel about them. This is apparently the peculiar modification of Berkeley's philosophy which is rather in vogue just now. I have written a long essay in the “Contemporary Review,” June, 1872, to disprove it; so I may be forgiven for remarking that Byron was hardly bound to adopt Mr. Browning's metaphysics: indeed he was not a metaphysician at all; yet I fancy he has very fairly answered Mr. Browning by anticipation where he observes in “Don Juan” that when “Bishop Berkeley said there is no matter, 'twas no matter what he said.” However, even on Mr. Browning's own showing, Byron was hardly the “flatfish” and “the cackling goose” he ventures to call him. For if the sea be sublime only because a man thinks so, then, as the average tourist who crosses from Dover to Calais, even when not sick, thinks nothing of the sort, Byron who made the sea sublime by feeling and expressing its sublimity must be so far superior to the average man, and quite as distinguished a person as he supposed himself. In fact, however conceited, he would not have known himself in this

tremendous rôle of *Creator*, which his philosophical antagonist by implication assigns to him.

But really it is news that Byron was a humbug also in this Nature-worship, of which we had all supposed him one of the principal founders and priests!—whose burning words of passionate adoration kindled one's own soul in boyhood to behold and worship—whose magnificent music, sonorous with storm and ocean and all that is free, illimitable, and enduring, thrilled the very heart of Europe, compelling it as at a god's command to bow down once more, when the angels of Faith and Hope seemed to be deserting for ever the desecrated shrines of mankind. Byron felt his own soul akin to all that was wild and stormful and immense, the moods of Nature solemnly and mysteriously responding to the moods in man. What though the soul be higher than the sea? To the sensitive and reflective spirit, the Sea, the Mountains, and the Stars are very types and symbols of Permanence, Order, Eternity. Nature and Man are elder Sister and younger Brother; she wakes intelligence and will in him; he knows himself in knowing her; she is a dumb and blind elder Sister whose laws inexorably bind him, while he imposes his spirit upon her, and reads spiritual meanings in her face. Man and his own soul were a chaos to Byron; yet in heroes and good women, but above all in the order of everlasting Nature, he found again the grandeur and divinity of a Kosmos. Individual human degradation, of which we in the midst can but dimly see the issue, receives a mystic interpretation from the unconscious innocence of a Divine Sphere which is evil and good, which is strong and weak, which is not individual but universal, and which is inchoate Humanity. Thence one can look up with greater trust than before even for the worms that sting one another in the dust. Why do the Arab in the desert, the Persian on his mountain, bow before the all-beholding Sun? In him is no sin, no vanity, folly, falsehood, or vain ambition; he gives life and light to all; himself veritable incarnation of one Invisible Sun.

Surely for Byron and such as he, in the absence of Revelation and Philosophy, this was the best school of morality. He who loses his own personality in Nature, who lays down before her, the Universal Mother and Tomb of Humanity, his own private wrongs and griefs and fevered aspirations, hereby redresses the balance so unduly weighted with the self-will and momentary longings of one restless passionate man. For She is One who toils not nor dreams, errs not nor supposes, raves not nor repents, but calmly fulfils Herself for ever. Mr. Browning would be impossible in those vast primeval realms where Nature still proudly asserts Her Dominion—where she oppresses men with creatures “burning bright in the forests of the night,” shakes them from their bubble habitations in her delirium, decimates them with the breath of

pestilence and famine, overwhelms them in torrents of devastating fire!

In a time when all secrets were at length supposed to be laid bare before man's microscopic understanding, all superstitions exploded, all mysteries explained, when the universe emptied of ancient awe seemed no longer venerable, but a hideous lazar-house rather made visible to all human eyes in every ghastly corner of it—before the Circe-wand of Materialism, Love metamorphosed into a sensation, and Man shrivelled to a handful of dust—when the Body of God's own breathing World was laid with familiar irreverence upon the board of a near-sighted professor to be dissected—then the Prophet-poets, Rousseau and Byron, pointed men to the World-Soul, commanding them once more to veil their faces before the swift subtle splendour of Life; this they named Nature; we may name it God!

The reaction in favour of Nature and common humanity was indeed commenced in the generation preceding Byron—by the two great poets, Chatterton and Burns; by the genuine poets, Shenstone, Goldsmith, Gray, Thomson, Blake, and Cowper. It was developed in its distinctively modern form equally by Byron's contemporaries, Shelley, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats. Still none of Byron's contemporaries filled the European rôle as Nature-poets that Byron filled—though the four I have named are equally eminent in this capacity; and in some respects even his superiors. Thus Byron has not, like Wordsworth, distilled for us the very essence of Nature's gentler moods, has not listened at her very heart, and beheld all the subtle changes of her countenance in sunshine or other tranquil joy; has not associated these with gentle women walking along life's cool sequestered vale, and fading quietly heavenward—nor the stern strong power of northern mountains (which this great poet has equally felt) with calm faithful heroic men in however humble a guise; while there was less in Byron of the *mystical* element so hard to define, which was present with magical effect in all those I have named, and is equally present in Tennyson—though with "Manfred" and "Heaven and Earth" before me, I cannot say that in its own form it was altogether absent. But in Wordsworth, on the other hand, there is an absence of the Titanic diabolic element; there is a certain hardness, or obstinate dulness, a sober cautious rationality, a serene self-complacency begotten of good inherited physical and moral constitution, together with general comfortableness of condition, that prevented his responding fully to the mighty impulses of his time, so wise and yet so unwise; the people about him were contentedly orthodox, and he was as their fatherly minister: he viewed his own venerable image in the lakes, and smiled benignant; very pleasant also seemed to him the stately park of Lord Lonsdale, and he thanked Providence for Lonsdales and stately parks. "Strong passions mean weak will," sings Mr. Patmore; but these are axioms that, like certain toys, will stand equally well

on either end. Strong will may mean weak passions—mere fluttering impulses of a student, hardly needing the rock-built citadel of virtue to withstand them : there is real giant *strength* in a Byron, though it be ill-regulated. Nevertheless, so high-souled a poet as Wordsworth must needs break forth, ever and anon, into “a *sadder* and a wiser man ;” his genius was too real not to be sorrowful—too reflective not to give its own poetic and distinctively modern colouring to the accepted creed ; and in his reconstruction of the hollow conventional poetic diction, as in his resolute turning with Crabbe toward “the humble annals of the poor,” he showed himself also in his measure a child of the Revolution, though his political sympathies were conservative. But this Diabolic (not Revolutionary) element is far more pronounced in Tennyson than in Wordsworth. *His* range is a wide one, whatever poetlings and criticasters may say ; witness those haunting and terrible poems, *The Vision of Sin* and *Lucretius*.

In Byron, again, there is less of what we feel in so much of Shelley, wherever Shelley is at his best ; harmonious marriage of consummate feeling, imagery, and expression, perfect poetic music, equal to that of Shakspeare and Milton in their highest flights. We seldom feel in Byron’s, as in Shelley’s lyrics, the very quintessence of ethereal spiritualization, the very soul of absolutely faultless verbal melodies, rising, falling, wayward, and untameable as a fountain blown ever by the wind, subject to no law but the law of their own lawless and superhuman loveliness. At the same time Shelley’s Protean impalpable superabundant splendours of imagery and diction are on the verge of vanishing into a spray of *mere* verbal effects, and sometimes his poetry unsuccessfully usurps the function of music proper. There was a certain absence in Shelley of that sustained architectonic creative faculty which is akin to Reason ; an absence which, were it not for his *transcendent* excellence in other respects, might even militate against his claim to be considered one of our country’s greatest poets. There is, however, a rare transfused fragrance, and pervading air or tone, that gives a certain unity to his brilliant compositions ; but in Byron’s best work, it is a complex organic whole, with members of differentiated function, that emerges, no mere roods of floating prismatic substance, with every part, as in low organizations, equally fulfilling the function of every other : yet he never gives an impression of mostly mechanical ingenuity, as does Southey ; his work is nourished upon passionate rational insight. Herein he is akin to the great creators ; he is clear, luminous, incisive, coherent in his descriptions ; healthy vision of a sane human creature never deserts him ; his strokes are few, yet sharp as those of a graving-tool, while Shelley’s vision seems often blurred and confused. But it is only the general character of an object Byron gives ; and where he tries to be delicate and feathery in his touches, like Wordsworth, Keats, or Shelley, he frequently becomes merely tame and conventional.

Moreover, in justice to Wordsworth, it must be allowed that there are tedious lengths of somewhat commonplace verse even in the early tales, as likewise in the early parts of *Childe Harold*—plenty of them moreover in the dramas.

In seeking for a *note* of this peculiar modern Nature-worship, I think we must set down as a principal one, *Pantheism*, either overt or implicit. For it is a *worship*—precisely as the Scandinavian and Greek Mythologies are worships—only in a modern form; and there was *less* of this in Spenser, Shakspeare, the Fletchers, Browné, Drayton, or Milton, although in these poets delight in external nature was most fresh and genuine. But no less in Byron, Wordsworth, and Coleridge than in Shelley there was *worship* of the Creature; though in Byron, because he had less metaphysical grasp of thought, in Wordsworth and Coleridge, because they were by conviction theists, the Pantheism was implicit; while in Shelley, as in Goethe, it was overt. In Tennyson, a theist, it is again implicit. In Goldsmith and that generation, as in Chaucer, there is, of course, nothing of this. The fifth great nature-worshipper, Keats, is so far not pantheistic, because he is to all intents and purposes a polytheistic Greek myth-maker born out of due time: he personified Nature; as indeed to a large extent did Spenser, and the other Elizabethans, and Chatterton; where he does not, he endows her with animation akin to the human, which again reveals in him implicit pantheism. But Goldsmith (like the lesser Georgian poets, Rogers, Milman, &c.,) regards the external world as the creation of a personal God, and simply records what he sees, and the pleasure it gives him, together with its remoter associations; always putting Nature well outside himself, humanity, and God, as something just created to be perceived—and give us emotions—or food and raiment.

Byron's tales are delightfully steeped in a sunny Eastern atmosphere—though, perhaps, they are hardly equal in this respect to the few wonderful lines depicting Eastern travel in his own "*Dream*," to Beckford's "*Vathek*," or to "*Hermann Agha*," a quite marvellous Eastern novel, recently published by Mr. Gifford Palgrave, the traveller; worthy of Sir Walter Scott as a novel, of the *Arabian Nights* as an Eastern tale. Byron's later story "*The Island*," is however, deliciously suffused with the tropical glow—though the versification and diction of it are in his most curiously careless and objectionable manner.

Like the best lyrics of Burns and Scott, Byron's are more alive with warm humanity, go more to the heart of mankind, than those lovely dissolving phantasmal ones of Shelley; though it is to be admitted that there is a vein of coarse earthliness and commonness about Byron that makes many of his lyrics poor and wooden, as Shelley's never are. But his best are rich with a masculine sorrow, often graceful, and tenderly musical in the highest degree. One need

name only "Bright be the place of thy soul," "When we two Parted," "The Wild Gazelle," the poems to his sister and Thyra. Yet the most original and distinguished of Byron's lyrical work is certainly that in which his manifold wrath, his passion for wild life, and his ardour for human freedom, are embodied. How glorious the "Isles of Greece," how fine "Sennacherib," and "The Song of Saul;" how powerful the "Ode on Buonaparte," and the "Ode from the French!" The most concentrated venom of hate is distilled into the lyric, "When the Moon is on the Wave" in *Manfred*. But his odes on the whole are not equal to Shelley's, whose passion for human liberty was quite as ardent, and more spiritual than Byron's; purified by his longing for a reign of Love and Peace; so that he breaks ever and anon into heavenly seraphic strains, as in *Hellas* and *Prometheus*, borne aloft upon the strong wings of varied lyrical measures—that never fail him. Shelley's fury of indignation in face of armed oppression is at white heat and tremendous; but there is a want of steadfast distinctness of thought, and aim, and feeling, even here. Byron may droop his pinion and flounder; but he never lacks this manful grasp of his theme; rejoicing moreover in the common earthly human effort and mixed stormy strife by which deliverance and the age of gold must sternly be fought for inch by inch. Hence, men in general will always feel his poetry more germane to them and to the real world. Shelley, the Peri, like his own skylark, sings to us from the sky.

The finest of the "tales," to my mind (it belongs to his later period), is "The Prisoner of Chillon;" that is in perfect harmony, and unutterably beautiful, with its solemn organ-peal of the "Sonnet to Liberty" as an overture. There is all Scott's unity of effect here, and more than his aroma of poetry indefinable. For Scott, it should be remembered, deliberately gave up the field of verse-poetry to his younger rival; he felt, and felt rightly, that they had much in common as poets, but that there was a *je ne sais quoi* about Byron's metrical work that made it for the most part rarer and higher in quality; they were both *romantic* poets, delighting in themes of love, and strife, and pageantry—with the supernatural mysterious element toning down the brilliancy of their work here and there. Scott had more of the plot-constructing faculty than Byron, and far more dramatic power: accordingly he became the greatest writer of prose fiction in the English language. For I cannot think (with all our abundant talent in this region) that, regarding him as a *spontaneous creative poet*, in the wider sense of that word, any English man or woman has ever rivalled him—except the man who surpasses all, Shakspeare: though Dickens has his own place apart, and Thackeray runs Scott very near. In his prose, by the way, Scott has achieved, I think, a finer work of art than Byron himself, in one of Byron's own special literary moods. I allude to the "Bride of Lammermoor,"

perhaps one of the four finest novels in the world ; " Don Quixote," " Les Misérables," and " Consuelo," being the other three. Moreover, Scott's feeling of the supernatural in Nature comes out especially in his novels, notably in the " Monastery : " this is very real and magical, and quite the feeling of mediæval romance, allowing for the difference of intellectual creed ; but all that was in his blood, and the traditions upon which he had been nourished. It is quite *akin* to Pagan Polytheism, and is just the old Nature-worship that could not be expelled altogether by the crude carpenter-theory which the established religion had made orthodox : the old gods might be devils and witches, as had been decreed ; but, anyhow, they would not be expelled altogether ; there they were mysteriously animating or inhabiting certain elements of Nature. The clouds were full of angels or demons ; the white light was God's throne, and fairies peopled the woods and streams. This feeling of physical elements as a *habitat* for spiritual beings is always associated with an instinctive fancy (or rather intuition) that they are a *naturally fit* habitation for them ; such spirits are virtually the souls corresponding to the bodies of these elements, the ideas, or spiritual essences of them personified—a conception so far justified by Philosophy, when she teaches that man is a final cause and consummation, a more perfectly finished truth, as it were, implicit in Physical Agencies : this Humanity repeating in a higher sphere the life of Nature, which is under one aspect that higher life in the forming, and repeating more emphatically in some Personalities than in others the special type of certain physical agencies—flowing stream in one man, stolid mountain in another : still the Pantheistic feeling that these Agencies are distinct though living Powers in communion with man, and influencing him, seems more essentially true—though of course there *may also* be individual spirits with subtle bodies inhabiting the various elements ; the elements themselves having, however, soul after their kind, as well as body. Thus in Dante's colossal poem, all the material imagery is informed with spiritual significance ; it is the elaborate embodiment of great moral and spiritual ideas : and Dante evidently looked with his earnest eyes upon the visible universe as God's grand symbol ; though of course his creed was Catholic and Theistic.

In " Childe Harold " there are passages which must hold their own for ever in the ranks of English poetry :—

" Once more upon the waters ! yet once more !
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows his rider ! Welcome to their roar !
Swift be their guidance wheresoe'er they lead !
Though the strained mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale,
Still must I on, for I am as a weed
Flung from the rock on ocean's foam to sail,
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail ! "

The exquisite lines that refer to Waterloo can hardly be forgotten—nor those sweet peaceful ones about Lake Leman that breathe the twin influence of Leman and of Shelley—nor the magnificent reverberation in clanging words of an Alpine thunder-storm :—

“Lausanne ! and Ferney ! ye have been the abodes
Of names which unto you bequeathed a name !”

Ay, and what of Rousseau's Clarens ; of Geneva, the city of Calvin, that other great Genevese reformer, and now of Coppet, and Diodati ? These all, with Bonnivard, are a felt presence by Leman—consecrating her shores and her waters. I went to Diodati lately. It was deserted, and we wandered through the rooms and about the garden where Byron and Shelley had sat conversing—where Milton too had set his foot in days gone by ! When Byron returned to Diodati, after sitting late into the night with Shelley on the opposite shore, the Shelleys from their chamber used to hear his rich voice singing across the water from his boat. Like Julie and St. Preux, he and Shelley were once nearly wrecked in a boat off Meillerie. This was the period at which one loves to think of the two poets as together, and afterwards at Venice, when they used to ride on the Lido. The 4th Canto, however, is grandest of all, has some of the finest descriptive poetry in our language. It opens worthily with Venice in her sad glory. How splendidly is the poet Tasso contrasted with his princely oppressor, Alphonso of Ferrara ! How the thunder and lightning of Terni's Cataract have passed into the shouting stanzas ! All the noble verses concerning Rome and her departed glories, her ruins and her triumphs of art, are worthy of the great subject. But what misery !—

“For all are meteors with a different name ;
And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame !”

With that “*Marah of misanthropy and despair within,*” whom couldst thou trust, who could trust thee ? Not even God to trust in, or the Divine All, which is self-reconciled, and of which thou wast one Age's world-agonizing Spirit ! After a stately and most pathetic lamentation over Princess Charlotte, there grow upon the soul and resound those ocean murmurs, which are the conclusion and crowning poetry of a poem that will be forgotten only with its native tongue. Vanishes here the “*Pilgrim of Eternity*” :—

Βῆ δάκεόν παρὰ θύνα πολυψαλίσβοιο θαλάσσης.

But since Byron, let us remember that the Age is awakening to new life—“*The age of ruins is past.*” It is full of Devil and Mammon worship, death, agony, and vulgar fever ; but he is no great poet who daintily hides himself from it in the study or the studio. The people are awake ; thought is awake ; each must enter into the life of the rude giant ; he only who does so dare pretend to see

beyond. There are great wars, and national movements, wonderful inventions, terrible conflict of principles ; the world is recreated at the breath of science ; our explorers visit all countries, and Columbus-like discover new continents : "Pioneers ! O Pioneers !"

Byron, in "Don Juan" especially, has shown a boundless creative imagination of the *realistic* order. Where men and women of a certain type are concerned, and that type is by no means so limited as Macaulay and some other critics have maintained, where the grander elements of Nature are in question, as also, in the evocation of high thoughts and feelings of a definite range in connection with these, he is first-rate, as frequently in tenderness. But for the creation of ideal worlds and their denizens, governed by lofty reflective imaginative purpose, and requiring sustained flights in high spiritual atmospheres, we must turn to Dante, Milton, or Shakspeare. In Byron fine typical Personifications are rare, such as we find in Spenser or Chatterton—Byron's "War," in "Childe Harold" being adapted from a finer personification in the "Marvellous Boy." Yet the strangely beautiful "dramatic mystery," "Heaven and Earth," might almost be excepted from this criticism, for here the gloom of coming Deluge and its deepening terrors are palpably, yet with appropriate indistinctness of visionary imagery, rolled around mystic loves of "woman wailing for her demon lover." Here there is much of the fine sweep of a great *idealistic* artist's brush : still even this required imagination of a far less idealistic order than the construction of a Pandemonium, a Hell, or a Purgatory. Bring that sea, and those mountains, which the poet knew so well, together—the great spectacular phenomena of mountain, cloud, and ocean—and there looms the Deluge. Byron's wonted range of subject and treatment is hardly here self-surpassed. His personages, even his immortals, are still embodiments of the same feelings, thoughts, and desires. Yet the dim outlines of those exulting demons in the twilight ; those angel-forms, and the women who call them, Aholibamah, and tender Anah ; the good men Japhet and Noah ; Raphael appearing to summon the new rebel angels to their duty ; the welter of common mortals struggling with doom—all this forms a magnificent lurid picture of a "world before the flood" that is almost worthy of our loftier spiritual masters. Still there is little here of sustained imaginative incarnation and realization of spiritual things—with wizard flashings of weird yet appropriate detail helping to impress the Dædal individualities sprung from the brain of their creator upon us. The Melancholia of Dürer—Sin and Death—Caliban—those apocalyptic souls in the Doom-circles of the Florentine, the regions wherein they dwell awfully aware with populous imagery, whereunto they appear as native—think of these ! and again of fantastic dream-worlds, self-involved and subtly infinite like the rose—Midsummer Night's Dream, the Tempest, Shelley's Prometheus,

visions of Calderon, Keats, and Coleridge. Nevertheless, there is a harmonious lyrical atmosphere pervading this grand shadowy creation, which sets it by itself as a great ideal work of a Master, who is perhaps greatest as a realistic poet. There is also one magnificent verse in the "Vision of Judgment" describing Satan, which, if it were not somewhat a reminiscence of Milton, one might pronounce Miltonic.

But although I hold with Shelley, Goethe, Scott, and Wilson, that "Cain" is one of the finest poems in our language, the early portion of the poem, wherein Byron may be said to enter into direct competition with Milton, is surely a failure. There is no soul-overwhelming grandeur at all in those queer regions of space to which he conducts Lucifer and Cain. Lucifer, moreover, is a melancholy Byron, only a little more graceful and sentimental than Cain. In his long discourse with Cain we discern little difference between them, while we do painfully feel here, as elsewhere in Byron where thought is wanted, that if Byron had been a thinker like Dante, or Milton, or Goethe, he might have sat beside the three greatest poets of Europe, Homer, Dante, and Shakspeare; but the lucubrations of Cain and Lucifer lack vigour and point, as those of Faust and Mephistopheles never do. It is in the human element, however, that Cain is so magnificent, as a *great dramatic picture*. And I cannot but think that though Byron is not a great dramatist, he is a great dramatic painter. I believe it is Wilson who says, that his groups and personages are as statuesque bronzes cast in the fire. It is to be recollected that Goethe, who ought to be an authority, most highly praised his dramas. Certainly he has not the wonderful skill in dramatic dialogue of Landor; nor in dramatic monologue of Mr. Browning. But where Byron is effective in drama, it is by lyrically pouring the quintessence of his characters into the mould of one supreme situation, capable of realising them with the utmost intensity. This seems to be somewhat true of Hugo also, though Hugo has more plot-constructing faculty—arranges and dovetails his incidents with all the skill of Calderon,—and heightens his effects by varying, as it were, and multiplying with tremendous prodigality of power such great effective situations. But there is little Shakspearian development of character either in Hugo or Byron; yet I should maintain, as against the ordinary criticism, that Byron can realise characters of a type opposite to that one type most congenial to his genius, sufficiently to present these as truly and vitally influencing one another, especially in certain supreme scenes or situations; that is not so in *Manfred*, which is a mere monologue; but it is so in "*Cain*," "*Marino Faliero*," and "*Sardanapalus*." From the third act onward, Cain becomes and continues magnificent—from where Cain mutters forebodings over little Enoch, his own and his sister Adah's child, while she gently remonstrates, to where Cain is contrasted with Abel, as the spirit of revolt and denial with that of tranquil faith, rising to utmost

heights of moral dignity and wrath, where Abel confronts the blasphemous who would overthrow the chosen altar of Jehovah, his own proud offering lying unaccepted, his own altar smitten to the dust. There is nothing in English poetry finer for tragic intensity and pathos, than the supreme scene where Cain strikes his brother dead with a brand snatched from the altar, then bows in horrified remorse over the corpse—he who so sullenly arraigned the fated Doom, fated through his own passions, half-righteous and half-evil, to bring himself that hated Doom into the world; Eve, the mother of all, cursing with terrific energy her own eldest-born, slayer of her well-beloved son; gentle Zillah, Abel's wife, lamenting over him; and Adah, one of the most perfect types of holy womanhood in literature,—Adah, when the dark smitten murderer bids her leave him alone, only answering with troubled wonder, "Why, all have left thee!" Then Cain, the brand upon his brow, wanders forth with Adah into the wilderness, she leading their little Enoch by the hand, kissing Abel's cold clay, and praying "Peace be with him!" to which Cain in the last words of this great poem responds, "But with *me*!" Byron's Cain is by no means a very wicked man; he is surprised as it were into the murder, and, as matters are here represented, we feel that he did well to be angry. He with becoming dignity makes an offering appropriate to him, according to his light, which he may well hope that the all-seeing, just God will accept; he is throughout half-doubtful about his God, half-defiant of what seems to himself evil in that God. His very objection to the sacrifice of innocent animals proves him to be humane, and a foe to all cruel oppression, as also his abhorrence of human vengeance, even in Deity, if it were true that Deity needed to be propitiated by bloody sacrifice. Since the great and holy Christian reformer of our nineteenth century, Frederick Maurice, need Christians any longer think this poem very blasphemous? That there are "*no ideas*" in Byron, moreover, Mr. Arnold in the face of this poem should scarcely maintain. I conceive "Cain" to be the philosophico-imaginative consummation to which the *Tales*, "*Manfred*," and "*Childe Harold*" tended. Together with "*Manfred*," moreover, it proves Mr. Browning's objection as to Byron's unduly exalting Nature over men, a somewhat unfortunate one. If you must judge a poet as you would a didactic philosopher, I should say that Byron's error is, on the contrary, in unduly exalting the individual human spirit; in a lack of humility and resignation. Cain, like Faust, is insatiably curious, and chafes against the limitations of human knowledge; yet he represents a faithless desultory time, which *ours* still is, moreover; for in this region of the intellect, he rather seems angry at not knowing without being at the trouble of learning; he takes no laborious pains reverently to seek truth. In that, too, Byronism represents an age of rather shallow scepticism that sneers and sighs over the insolubility of problems, which it is too weak and idle manfully to grasp—but with

a doom overshadowing himself, his beloved ones and all mankind, which seems to him unintelligible and unjust, he refuses to be meekly happy and content, even though he loves Adah and his child ; he is the Genius of speculative yearning, oppressed and over-charged with evil within, the curse of hereditary sin ; morbidly sensitive to evil without ; over-clouding all past, present, and prospective good with the gloom of his own sullen frown, out of which must inevitably spring the lightning of his crime ; even by the side of his own true wife and his own sweet boy, *alone* ! In a fine sonorous invective Lucifer avers that God Himself, however powerful, must be most miserable of all—for He is the most *alone*. Could He but annihilate himself and all, but alas for His and our *immortality* ! Cain finds too that “the *tree of knowledge is not that of life*.” Byron’s is the wail of baffled human understanding, without faith, hope, resignation, self-control, inward harmony. But if in “Cain” he defies heaven, in “Manfred” he defies hell, and denies, though I think in vain, the power of any evil spirits over him, asserting proudly, and with truly sublime daring, his own spiritual independence and dignity. He is a Pagan, not a Christian, though with some genuine Christian sympathies, and a Hebrew creed still hanging about him. But he never holds up self-sacrifice, humility, or patience, is always haughty and aggressive ; he endures, indeed, but somewhat less than a Pagan—he more actively despairs and rebels.

Christianity has taught him discontent with this life, but he cannot accept the solutions of her theologians ; so with tenfold more bitterness than Atrides exclaiming to Zeus, when his sword broke in his hand, “There is no God more evil-minded than thou”—than the Neapolitan fisherman beating the image of his Saint, who sends storms instead of fine weather—Byron defies and rails against his Deity. But of course *he* had only a lingering notion that the popular representation might be true, and that there was really a Creator, who, having created immortal spirits, tyrannically forbids them, as Lucifer finely phrases it, “*to use their immortality*,” their reason, their conscience, and their heart. It is against this God, formed in the image of priests and kings, that Lucifer and Cain rebel, rather than against the true Author and Essence of Things. Of this true Author and Essence of Things Byron had unfortunately, from the circumstances of his time, and his own want of philosophic grasp, very little idea ; yet he believed in a God ; and very naturally, however irrationally, confounded the true God with the current orthodox conception of Him, against which he inveighed—if vaguely, still with enlightened soul, knowing that God was by theology caricatured, and that the vulgar conception was monstrous and to be fought against. But after all, this was a *dominant* conception, one that had always been dominant more or less ; the force of education, authority, universal conviction, practically moulding all the relations of society, together with the poet’s own

ineffectual habit of thought, forced the Idea on him as a kind of Reality ; but his better yet audacious self dared to wrestle with it, even on this basis of its dubious reality ; so Job ventures to argue with the Lord. In fact, a half truth this belief must be, and for long it has been to mankind as a whole truth ; " the times of this ignorance God winked at ; " but the idea of Him must be slowly purified. Acquiescence in evil is not altogether desirable, and to pronounce evil good, because divinely appointed, may be to fetter ourselves, the human race, and its destiny of progress. There might even be an evil Demiurgus, God of this world, as some Gnostics believed ; if so, Byron will not worship *him*. Byron holds the human spirit, or at least the *elect* human spirit, with its Eternal Reason and Sense of Justice, essentially equal to any gods or devils whatsoever, however powerful these may be. Both Manfred and Cain hurl defiance at the very skies. What makes Cain sound blasphemous is that Cain believes in Jehovah, yet defies him ; this is precisely as Shelley's Prometheus defies Zeus ; but we have been brought up to call this apparent wrong of theology right, because we are assured that it is divinely revealed, whereas we should have asked ourselves, *how can doctrines be revealed unless by an anti-Christ or usurping God, if they are irrational or immoral ?* Lucifer and Cain, like Prometheus, are champions of human liberty. The ultimate arbiter, Fate, will dethrone the unjust Zeus in the end. To this true God they virtually appeal, and they cannot be disappointed ; or in other words, they really appeal from God in His partial, to God in His fuller revelation of Himself, which He is indeed making through themselves ; yet their shallow presumption and irreverence He disapproves and punishes ; still it is He, the World-spirit, striving in them to free Himself, though he justifies also the humble holy Abels. If the evil cannot be destroyed, it can be chained down ; the Good, and Just, and Rational is Lord over the Evil and Inane ; that is a slave, a drudge, essential indeed, yet subordinate and to be subordinated. One can indeed only sympathise *partly* with this revolt ; it is *in part* directed against the very nature of things, against the true Sovereign God, who must be beyond our right and wrong, right in a manner and degree to which our rectitude cannot attain. Neither Byron nor Shelley were possessed with that *awe* which becomes a mortal before the unfathomable Mystery. Even in his beloved storms Byron felt little spiritual awe, was chiefly " sharer in their fierce and far delight," or recklessly contemptuous of humanity's weakness. Cain's sullen hatred of effort and labour, his want of patient faith, his obstinate self-will, his ignorance of how to conquer Fate by calmly accepting it, or circumventing it by fertility of resource, this is truly evil and folly, and miserable weakness ; it is anarchy, the weakness of all radical rebellion, for instance of the recent insane developments of destructive irreligion and democracy. Yet when all is said, is there not the

mysterious and unutterably awful Fountain of Evil, coæval in some inscrutable manner with that of Good? Forgive then the cry of rebellious despair! it too proceeds from the heart of the infinite. Happiness! wonder at *that* rather.

Macaulay says Byron can only paint one man and one woman—a gross exaggeration; for Don Juan and Sardanapalus are so different from Cain that they cannot be confounded; and as to women, it is mere confusion of thought to confound Adah, Angiolina, Haidee, Gulnare, and Myrrha, wonderfully realised and thoroughly feminine types all of them. Gulnare is the passionate fierce beautiful southern woman, of which type Byron has given us many brilliant portraitures. Haidee is a loving passionate girl, but a thoroughly innocent, albeit fiery-natured one—she might indeed become Gulnare, but she is something totally distinct. Adah is not to be surpassed for heavenly yet human tender unsullied perfection of womanliness—a perfect sister, mother, wife; she is not surpassed in Shakspeare, Victor Hugo, George Sand, Walter Scott; even the Marguerite of Goethe is only equal to her. Then we have Zarina in “Sardanapalus,” Angiolina in “Marino Faliero,” skilfully painted women of a totally different order—noble women too—both evidently intended for idealised portraitures of Lady Byron—self-possessed, stately, somewhat cold, yet excellent and affectionate. In “Don Juan,” how marvellously good is Donna Julia—and her letter how immortally inimitable! We have again Lady Adelaide Amundeville, a very clever sketch of an English lady of fashion, and the sweet seraphic Aurora Raby, a sort of English Adah.

“Aurora Raby, a young star who shone
O’er life, too sweet an image for such glass,
A lovely being scarcely formed or moulded,
A rose with all its sweetest leaves yet folded.
She gazed upon a world she scarcely knew,
As seeking not to know it; silent, lone,
As grows a flower, thus quietly she grew,
And kept her heart secure within its zone.
There was awe in the homage which she drew;
Her spirit seemed as seated on a throne
Apart from the surrounding world, and strong
In its own strength.”

Myrrha in “Sardanapalus” is a heroine of the antique type, beautiful and splendid-souled, rousing the luxurious monarch to lofty action.

If Byron had possessed the instincts of a great dramatist, he could never have surrendered himself to the bondage of the so-called “unities.” Yet on the whole he may instinctively have felt that these laws furnished him with certain artificial restraints, helpful to his desultory though intense genius; serving as a kind of blow-pipe to concentrate its flame upon one supreme moment. It is indeed difficult to deliver a verdict on the dramas. For “Sardanapalus” is a

very fine play, and "Marino Faliero" shows real dramatic power, yet is scarcely a good drama; while the "Two Foscari" is dull and wooden, and "Werner" a mere plagiarism. The blank verse of Byron's dramas is probably the worst ever written by a great poet; the lines end in the awkwardest of monosyllabic parts of speech "ands" "ofs," &c. There is no harmonious flexibility and resonance in the metre at all; and there is a quantity of tedious prose cut up into lengths. The motive in "Marino Faliero" strikes one as inadequate to support the play's action, as Byron has represented that motive; he has not skilfully made us feel the mixed half unconscious influences that probably prompted the old Doge. Yet the fiery old man is finely drawn, and the scene where he reveals himself to the conspirators in their midnight meeting is full of stormy power, and thoroughly true to nature, the conflict of feelings in the old man as an aristocrat in such a position being subtly realised. Here again Byron draws from within. The concluding scene (the execution) is eminently *picturesque*. But "Sardanapalus" is certainly a very fine play—a great dramatic success, though it is, perhaps, hardly equal to Otway, "The Cenci," Sheridan, or the only great English play of recent times, Sir Henry Taylor's "Philip van Artevelde." In "Sardanapalus," however, we behold (so far as the "unities" allow) the march of tragic historic events, and these have a palpable influence in developing the character of a luxurious, effeminate, yet amiable, generous, and ultimately heroic monarch. Myrrha, moreover, the grand Greek maiden, together with Salemenes, the stern honest warrior, who, though but a sketch, is life-like and well-realised, have a noble influence upon the king, who can appreciate their elevated characters. There is a weak side to the play, no doubt, as Bishop Heber pointed out—in the group of Arbaces, and Beleses the priest, who are not dramatically represented in their mutual relations with one another. Admirable, however, is the scene wherein Sardanapalus, surprised feasting in his summer pavilion by those rebels whom with indolent good-nature he has half-pardoned, starts forth, worthy of his ancestors, an avenging warrior, though too late; calling, however, in his vanity, for a mirror while arming, and for his most bejewelled helmet, as both lighter, more becoming to his delicate beauty, and also more conspicuous to friends and foes, even though it expose him to a death which he half-recklessly courts. Excellent too are the battle scenes, full of lusty movement and all the din of onset. Nowhere has Byron so fully dramatised himself as here, I suspect, though the gloomy phase of his character is suppressed—but the hero is a half-sceptical epicurean, masculine and brave, yet with many a feminine trait.

Whatever our verdict on Byron as dramatist, it remains to be remarked that he was one of the greatest satirists England has produced—three only (if so many) can be elevated to stand beside him—Swift, Pope, and Butler. Thackeray can hardly be placed so

high, nor Dryden, nor Churchill—though as wit he has no doubt other rivals, and as a humorist he is surpassed by Shakspeare and Dickens. But in scathing, savage, half-playful banter—playful as a tiger—in masterful annihilating strokes of witty indignation—he has again a song, as Goethe says, “all his own”—in spite of Pulci and Whistlercraft: he is Apollo discharging his arrows at the Python, Michael with his proud foot upon the body of Satan. The scornful wit of the “Vision of Judgment” is Titanic—as where “Turncoat Southey” offers to Satan to write his life, and Satan declining with a bow, Southey glibly appeals to Michael the Archangel with the same tempting offer. Here is George III.—“*and midst them an old man with an old soul, and both extremely blind.*” Then what terrific lines those are on the Prince Regent, on occasion of his presence at the opening of the coffins of Charles I. and Henry VIII.!

But I admit that “Don Juan” is on the whole Byron’s greatest work. Byron had a good deal of the eighteenth century, and also of the Restoration period about him, after all. The era of the Regency was for scoffing profligacy not at all unlike that of the Restoration, and the congenial literary influence on him, not only of Pope, Dryden, and their bitter personal animosities, but of licentious Restoration dramatists, and of corrupt men like Rochefoucauld, Grammont, and Horace Walpole is very palpable. He was moulded also by English novelists like Smollett and Fielding; certain libertine French novels too reappear in his works. Yet I own “Don Juan” seems to me morality itself compared to a rotten whited sepulchre of a book like “Chesterfield’s Letters.” Still the immoral laxity of tone is not to be denied. If Byron had not led the dissipated life he did, and moved for some time in “good society” also, he could certainly not have written this “man of the world’s” poem, which is that, though something more. But whatever advantage he and Moore may have derived from “knowing life,” it was not a moral one, and there is an odour by no means of sanctity, a rather sulphurous odour indeed, a certain conventional humbug and hollowness and disbelief in good, that clings both to the man and to his writings, simply because, while he spurned the whole lot of enamelled corpses as poet, freeman, and idealist, yet as aristocrat and man of fashion he was half one of them, and even looked up with envy to creatures like Beau Brummell and “the first gentleman in Europe.” This taint has made Byron distasteful to some who should have taken a more comprehensive view; but assuredly Byron has not quite shaken off the polite ceremonies he spurns. In Burns and Shelley you breathe a purer atmosphere. Shelley is a sort of volatile seraph; Burns is inconstant, but ever a true passionate *man*; as Walter Scott is also. If Byron’s head was of gold, his feet were of clay.

For all this, “Don Juan” is one of the world’s great poems.

Byron himself claimed that he had therein produced a true epic ; and I have always thought with some reason. Is it not the epic of that transition period in Europe ? It reflects faithfully that age's varying moods, grave and gay, moods of stirring strife and battle, of enterprise and revelry—its appetite for pleasure, its cynical epicurean scepticism, denial and mockery—together with its opposite mood of sentiment, of pathos, of bitter despair, of nature-worship—its reverence for feudalism, and refinement, and tradition—its revolt in favour of simplicity and plain goodness and common humanity. It revels in war, yet inveighs against the tyranny and barbarism thereof : it reverences the ideal, yet refuses to behold it in life—chiefly on account of its own wanton perverseness, and half *blasé*, half childish irreverence of soul. Even in the poem's very want of artistic proportion, of beginning, middle, or ending proper, in its daring originality of form, metre, and language, it is faithful to the spirit of the time. For Auerbach justly remarks that World-Sorrow, and we should add Negation, or Heine's "*Weltsvernichtung*," cannot produce the perfect work of art. Byron in fact never did. But Don Juan was a well-known modern European Type, of which Byron made his own use : the poet had pitched at last upon the very subject and very manner perfectly adapted to develop his transcendent powers :—

"I rattle on exactly as I'd talk
With anybody in a ride or walk."

He needed not here to be always up on the heroic stilts whether raised aloft by his theme or no ; and in his graver work the small critics often caught him getting off the high horse in those inevitable intervals of flight when Pegasus wants to crop the earthly grass. And then they assembled shouting that this was a poet with a "bad ear," a careless uncertain poet, with inadequate powers of expression ; for in moments of less lofty emotion a first-rate poet, they tell us, should make mouths and beat the air, and say *pudding*, *prunes*, and *prism*, and many "blessed words" like "*Mesopotamia*," to make the vulgar believe that he is always at the boiling-point of inspiration. If he cannot be always moving, he can at least blow the steam off ostentatiously when he stops. But what perfect English is "Don Juan"—it has always the right word ready. Alas ! how few poets write English now ! In "Don Juan" the metre and language seems to shape itself out of the sense and intent of the narrative ; here the style is to the matter what the foam and impetus and tumult are to the wave. "Don Juan" is diffuse ; its egotistic half chaffy gossip is often empty enough, occasionally even a little tiresome ; but we have always to admire its facile masterfulness of rhyme and metre, while it is always relieved by endless versatility of matter, and changeableness of mood. Cynical it is certainly, and world-weary ; but half its paradox is chaff. There is a vein of rollicking buffoonery through

the whole, which by ponderous moralists is always missed. "I rattle on exactly as I'd talk"—just so, and we know the half grave, half gay nonsense Byron talked. The man was half an Aristophanes, half a Rabelais. His buffoonery at Newstead with the monk's skull for drinking cup, and monk's robes of sackcloth—his dressing up the statues of Neville's Court at Cambridge with surplices—his popping with his pistol at those stone ornaments on the house-roof opposite his own at Missolonghi, till all the old women came howling out to remonstrate with this eccentric Milordo who had arrived to deliver Greece and leave his weary life in their fever jungles—his hilarious practical jokes—all showed the grown-up schoolboy.

If you weep too much over this man, fair ladies and sad young gentlemen, even though he bid you weep, he will look up laughing in your faces and overwhelm you with mockery : you must not take all he sings for gospel ; in the very heart of this there is a hollowness and a jeer ; and surely he who has laid his hand upon the very heart of God's universe must be, like Byron, both a weeping and a laughing philosopher ! Writers have become indeed more radically miserable since Byron. I can hear no merriment in the ghastly "Contes Drolatiques" of Balzac—none in the hollow spectral mockery of Heine—none in the splendid putrefaction of Gautier, Baudelaire, and Edgar Poe. After all, Byron is no hysteric young Frenchman to be manipulated by a mistress and shoot himself ! His intellectual and emotional range is vast—he can thunder and rave and laugh like the sea. For the rest, as he says himself, if he laughs, it is often that he may not weep. And there is indeed much of bitterness and disappointment in his hilarity—he is still misanthropic, and incredulous of human excellence ; but he will try now to disburthen himself of his sorrow by a jest or an epigram. His reckless dissipation, his carnal excesses, may have dimmed his ideal, and he poses before us more as a *roué* man of the world, and a light-hearted sceptic ; but after all he cannot always keep the mask on, and when he removes it we behold a great and true man in tears—"Childe Harold" himself, but less egotistic in his thoughts and aims and interests, with maturer digested knowledge of men and things than before ; on one side of his face, indeed, a hoary, world-weary sinner, but on the other a still generous, adventurous, high-spirited boy. Nowhere in Byron can I, for my part, perceive the "fiend gloating triumphantly over human frailties," which some profess to see. Rousseau, let alone the Bible, would have taught him better than that, and did teach him better.

In clear, graphic, realistic narrative power, as well as in humour, Byron in "Don Juan" reminds one of Chaucer and Boccaccio, while his descriptions of human loveliness have all the luscious luminous colouring of Ovid or Correggio ; nay, there never were and never will be such descriptions. The harem scenes are in this respect

unrivalled. Is there anything quite equal to that lovely idyl of Haidee and Juan's love after the shipwreck on the beautiful island? Such incidents as those of the shipwreck, the siege of Ismail, and the intrigue with Donna Julia, have all the *verve* and narrative power of Homer, all his direct reality and breathing life; though there is not here, as in the *Iliad*, one great action dominating all the incidents. But there are certainly traces of development and change in the charming dandy—events and persons are transforming him slowly into the man of the world, though the bloom of generous youth is still on him; he is consummately life-like. Granted that type of character, mobile, eager, superficial, events and persons would have just the kind and amount of influence they have over him. Here, moreover, there is no longer any question of delineating a proud, morose, melancholy genius: all men, if not all women, can sympathise with this hero; he is one of themselves, idealised indeed; but only with the more ordinary popular qualities furnished up and augmented; commonplace, not more than usually intellectual, emotional, or imaginative. This is one of the notable merits of the poem, as a work of art. What though Byron found this petted spoiled personage in himself? Yet no other qualities of his own very heterogeneous personalty, none of those he is accused of being able alone to represent, has he attributed to this pleasant handsome boy. He never makes Juan moralise, or mock, or moan; though he drops him occasionally, and does that himself. The fact is, that genius *must always be*, in some mysterious manner, whatever it represents to the life. Goethe only makes his women, and one or two types of man *live*: the rest he skilfully *imitates*. Shakspeare, on the other hand, was an intellectual and moral miracle. He *lives* in innumerable human types. But we cannot pause to speak of the inexhaustible wit, the pointed epigrams, the scathing scorn, the numerous pithy couplets such as this, in the cantos about English society:—

"There was the Honourable Mrs. Sleep,
Who seemed a white lamb, and was a black sheep."

In our intellectual, competitive-examination, tradesmanlike, priggish age, it is perhaps possible a little to underrate this Alcibiades kind of hero—natural, adventurous, subtle and supple as a Greek, beautiful, daring, courteous, athletic, tender, half feminine, fascinating—who enjoys life in a buoyant dare-devil way, is not too wise, self-conscious, or scrupulous, to kiss any sweet mouth which beauty, youth, health, and good fortune may raise to his own; nor so afflicted with metaphysical hypochondria, as to lament very long or very loud, when Dame Fortune for a change turns capricious and smites him.*

* This commonness, or somewhat theatrical attractiveness of Byron's heroes does in some measure, as has been truly remarked, account for their so swift and unparalleled universal popularity; these heroes appealed, in some degree, to the less-elevated instincts of worship among men—as did Schiller's Robbers. Nevertheless,

I am far from sure that it *is all loss* for ordinary men that they should be got to look for a moment at the world—at life and other countries and other persons, all the nooks and corners of this wonderful young world of ours, through so magical and exhilarating an atmosphere as this of Byron's—should unlearn for awhile the commonness and cant and *ennui* and grey sordid vapidity of their own poor selves—even of what is ostensibly highest and holiest in their existence, yet often circumscribed, dead, and conventional, after all ; though, of course, I acknowledge the danger of so much explosive material being stored where youthful blood is mantling and burning. But, at any rate, a poet who could throw himself so thoroughly into this youthful gaiety of temperament cannot have been, even at this time, the played-out ruined devil which excellent and reverend persons made out—even if he had not proved the contrary by writing the most ideal cantos of Childe Harold, and many other of his most ideal works, at the same time ; and those profoundly pathetic verses on his birthday, only a few days before he died for human freedom.

On the whole, then, Byron is probably a greater English poet than any of his great contemporaries, except Shelley—Milton alone perhaps being their peer among English poets ; though I do not know that it is profitable, or even really possible, to make such comparisons—Chaucer, Burns, Wordsworth, Keats, Coleridge, Tennyson, and some others, having won their own high places, for which it behoves us to be thankful. I have no patience with people who, because they admire Byron, cannot, or say they cannot, admire Tennyson, and *vice versa*. Tennyson, by no means wanting in passion, glowing, rich, rare, intellectual, has given us much Byron did not give. But, assuredly, Shakspeare only towers *above* Byron. Mr. Browning, who believes in Shelley, might remember that Shelley would not have called Byron a “flat-fish” or “cackling goose ;” and Mr. Carlyle, who believes in Goethe, might remember that Goethe said,—“Byron alone I place by my side ; Scott is nothing to him.” (If we take in Scott's prose, however, then Scott must stand by our very highest below Shakspeare.) “There were giants in those days.” Byron, though he had small sympathy with his countrymen, and their foreign politics, for they took the Legitimist orthodox side in continental strife, was still an illustrious “Roman,” and proud of being the citizen of no mean city. He inveighed against “Villainton” and his battles ; but yet the brilliant and gigantic struggles in Europe and in India out of which

viewed with any seriousness, the tragic heroes of Byron have a moral and spiritual significance quite as deep as that of Wallenstein, Macbeth, or Coriolanus. After all, however, his tragic figures are rather ideal types than real men, more like Molière's than like Shakspeare's. And while Harold, Manfred, and Cain are embodied types of fate-stricken human passion, and illimitable imaginative yearning, Don Juan represents “omnivorous appetite for pleasure,” which must soon end in satiety and despair.

his country emerged splendidly victorious doubtless helped to mould his poetry of warlike strife and fiery action. On his travels and in his foreign abodes, moreover, he was constantly in the very focus of civil and international commotion. Byron was English, however, in many respects, notably in his fragmentariness and self-contradiction, in his illogical intellect, in his unsystematic unfinished ruggedness both of mind and style ; so one does not wonder at the reaction in his favour now : I do not think he will ever be long out of favour with us. He is a rude mountain-mass, tropically gorgeous, not perfectly symmetrical, a mighty ocean ever and anon bursting through the dykes of our proprieties and devastating our plains ; and superfine academic critics will always prefer the dainty finish of men who are lesser poets, though defter craftsmen. Perhaps most of what Byron thought, wrote, and did, was, like his beauty, *mutilated* ; but he was a glorious torso, worth a million smirking *petit-maitres* in wax ; he has the splendid imperfection of an *Æschylus*, a *Shakspeare*, a *Dante*, and a *Hugo*. Of what strange and variously mingled elements was this man formed ! the breath of Genius descending from on high upon him, angels and demons perchance having also some unguessed concurrence in so vast a personality. I am often reminded of Chatterton. For was not that child one of the first English prophets of "world-sorrow," after all ? Study his modern poems, and those "antiques" with the modern wail piercing through so many of them ! conceived as they were in the mystic shadow of old St. Mary's Church. Consider his awful supernatural life of seventeen years—can it be that the sub-chaunter's boy of Bristol did not altogether disappear from the earth after that dark mad agony of Brooke Street ?

Wandering one day in the cemetery of Ferrara, Byron found two epitaphs that struck him forcibly.

"Martini Luigi
Implora Pace."

"Lucrezia Picini
Implora eterna quiete."

These few words, he comments in a letter, say all that can be said or sought : the dead have had enough of life ; all they want is rest, and this they implore. Here is all the helplessness and humble hope and death-like prayer that can arise from the grave. "I hope," he continues, "that whoever may survive me and shall see me put in the foreigners' burying-ground at the Lido, within the fortress of the Adriatic, will have those two words and no more put over me—'Implora Pace !'"

RODEN NOEL.

MEMOIRS OF A CYNIC.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CONTRASTS."

XI.

I MET Lefevre at breakfast the next morning, when he informed me that he had already called on Delorge, and found the infant had died shortly after the termination of the ballet.

"After all," he said, "it is perhaps better it should be so. To have lived to maturity with its debilitated constitution would have been impossible. It is now, poor thing, at rest, and free from the troubles and miseries which would have awaited it in this world, and the labour and anxiety it would have caused its parents. At the same time, I very much fear for the manner in which Delorge will get through his task to-night. I cheered him as well as I could, but I shall view his appearance as Zephyr with great anxiety."

Our breakfast over, Lefevre, as he had promised me the day before, kindly became my guide in visiting the principal monuments, churches, collections of fine arts, and other objects of interest in Turin. This occupied us till somewhat late in the afternoon, when after taking our places in the coupé of the diligence to Milan for the next morning, we separated till dinner-time, Lefevre, as stated in the last chapter, having some business of importance to attend to. In the evening we again attended the theatre. As I had great curiosity to know how Delorge would go through his part, I remained in the box while Lefevre went behind the scenes to see if it would be possible to enter into any satisfactory arrangements with Frasi. Delorge's performance was a singular proof of the duality of the human mind. He danced not only with great vigour, but with great ease, and was abundantly applauded. It was evident to me that throughout he was trying his best to conceal from the audience the real state of his feelings, for, while attentive and careful in the performance of his part, I could frequently perceive a change in his countenance from the set dancer's smile to one of momentary pain. Delorge's performance that evening was a complete success, and at the conclusion, Lefevre's remark came vividly back to me, that frequently an actor whom the audience imagined to be the happiest of mortals when he was on the stage, was carrying within his breast a heart as heavy as lead.

The ballet over, Lefevre returned to the box, and told me he had succeeded in engaging Frasi, and upon one-half the terms she had asked the evening before.

"I don't expect," continued Lefevre, "that she will make any very

great success, but she is a pretty girl, and will become a decided favourite with the Omnibus-box, which, you should understand, frequently performs gratuitously the part of the hired *claque* in a French theatre, the principal difference being that in London the spectators in the Omnibus-box are officers in the Guards, or young men of good family and position, while those in the *parterre* of Paris theatres are generally the lowest of the population. Although between ourselves," he continued, confidentially, "I am not altogether certain whether their occupation is not the more honourable of the two." *

The next morning, in company with Lefevre, I left Turin. Fortunately we had the whole of the coupé to ourselves. For some time my attention was attracted by the beautiful scenery of the Alps to our left, and the low hills covered with verdure to the right, which gradually subsided into the plains, and it was not till after we had passed Alessandria that any consecutive conversation took place between us. It commenced by my remarking to Lefevre how well Delorge had danced the evening before.

"Yes, poor fellow, he exerted himself wonderfully," said Lefevre; "but he had great difficulty in doing so. I assure you at the beginning of the ballet, before he went on the stage, he was so much depressed I thought he would have broken down. By a violent effort, however, he obtained control over his feelings, and, as you say, succeeded admirably."

"The audience evidently thought so, judging from their applause." I said.

"That of the audience was not the only applause he received," said Lefevre. "All the ballet-girls, standing unseen in the wings, applauded him during his dancing, so that every time he turned, and his eye fell on them, they clapped their hands to keep up his spirits. Even Frasi, notwithstanding the anxiety she was in about her engagement with me, which was not then concluded, had left me, and taken her position among the others, and was as loud in her applause as the rest or even louder."

"After all that is said against them, there appears to be really a great deal of good among these poor creatures," I remarked.

"There is, indeed," said Lefevre, "and far more so than the casual observer would give them credit for. That their sins are many is perfectly true, but a more charitable community than they are I believe never existed. Notwithstanding all the jealousy and spite

* In the palmy days of the Haymarket Italian Opera, a long box to the left of the proscenium and on a level with the stage was called the Omnibus-box, and was principally filled by young men of family and position. For an outsider to obtain a seat in it was as difficult as to gain admittance into White's or Boodle's Clubs. In it originated the Tamburini Row, and others of a similar description. To secure the good opinion and patronage of the Omnibus-box was always considered a great point with the managers of the opera.

which the women of the stage possess to a proverb, they will frequently bestow even on those to whom they have been the most spiteful the greatest kindness, when they are in distress and no longer their rivals. Even in their most depraved condition, specimens of good feeling will occasionally develop themselves in a manner no one would have expected, and that, too, without the individuals themselves being able to account for their conduct. I have met with many examples of the kind."

"I wish you would narrate to me one or two," I said.

"Well," replied Lefevre, "there was once a certain Carlotta Morlacchi, who was employed some years since, in Monk Mason's time, as a dancer in the ballet. She was as ignorant and uneducated as a low ballerina could be, was very handsome but heavy, and not particularly graceful."

"Of the Scuola Walmoden?" I suggested.

"Exactly," said Lefevre. "I should say that heavy as her body might have been, her character was of the lightest description, and she had many admirers among the patrons of the theatres. One, however, Sir L. S., a man of immense wealth, contrived to engage her entirely for himself, and she ruled over the old blockhead with a despotism of the most absurd, though rigorous description. Whatever Morlacchi required, he was obliged to get; and I really believe that frequently she used to invent things she did not require, or things she had possibly no taste or use for, merely for the fun of exercising her rule over him. One morning, on going to the theatre for the purpose of getting up a new ballet, I was very much out of spirits, and Morlacchi noticing it, inquired the cause. I told her I had witnessed that morning a scene of great sorrow. In an apartment above me lodged a curate, with his wife and three children, who were in the deepest poverty. I would willingly have relieved them, I said, but they were such a nice amiable family, and of so high a tone, that I did not like to offer them any assistance. 'And why not?' she asked. 'Because I should be afraid of hurting their feelings,' I replied. 'Hurt a person's feelings by giving them anything!' Morlacchi remarked; 'why, I never heard of such a thing. I take everything offered to me, and never feel the slightest sorrow in doing so. But neither you nor I need put ourselves to any trouble in this matter. Find out in what way they can be benefited, and I will make Sir L. S. assist them. They will be under no obligation to either of us, nor to Sir L. S. himself, for he would never do it from any good feeling on his own part.'

"Although," continued Lefevre, "I was somewhat puzzled to see the force of Morlacchi's argument, I made inquiries of the landlady of the house in what manner the poor family could be benefited without hurting their feelings. 'I hardly know,' said the landlady. 'They are very badly off, in fact half starving, and it is a great injury to me, for they owe me three weeks' rent, and I can ill afford

to lose the money.' 'But can you not tell me more about them?' I asked. 'Well, the fact is, he came up to town hoping to get a curacy, but has been unsuccessful; and now, I think, they are at their wit's-end to know what to do.' The next morning, Morlacchi asked me more about them, and whether she could not do something to assist them. 'Nothing at all, I am afraid,' I replied: 'though very poor, I suspect they are also proud. He is a curate, and wishes to obtain some employment, and I don't think, Cara, church matters are much in your way.' 'I'm afraid not,' said Morlacchi, looking serious. 'However, I'll try what I can do before I give it up; and we then went on with the rehearsal.

"The next morning when we met, Morlacchi wore a most amiable and pleasing expression on her countenance. 'Caro maestro,' she said, 'I think I have succeeded. I find Sir L. S. has what is called a "living" in his gift, which is now vacant. Get me the particulars of the poor curate, and I will insist on his aiding him to obtain it.' 'And how will you do that?' I asked, feeling at the same time somewhat nervous at the idea of employing such an agency as Morlacchi in so serious a matter. 'I'll tell him I want it done,' she said, 'and if he won't, I'll quarrel with him. Ah, don't you be afraid, I'll have my own way. I see you doubt me, but it will turn out as I say.' Well," continued Lefevre, "I did make the inquiries, and, having put the whole on paper, gave it to Morlacchi. She applied to her old admirer, who treated the application with contempt. She did quarrel with him, as she promised to do, and at the end of a few days the old blockhead not only made her several presents, but agreed to give the curate the living. And here the singular portion of Morlacchi's behaviour breaks out. She not only insisted on my keeping secret from the curate by whose agency the living had been obtained, but on Sir L. S. doing the same, and the curate had not the slightest idea what patronage had been at work in his favour.

"Another singular point exhibited itself in Morlacchi's conduct," continued Lefevre. "On the very day the curate was inducted into the living, she broke off all acquaintance and connection with her old admirer, nor during her stay in England would she ever renew it, although the offers he made her were of the most lavish description. Now I hold that there must have been some profound respect for the church and holy things concealed in that woman's mind, without her being able in any possible manner even to explain to herself the motive power which influenced her."

(I may here add that some years since, and long after Sir L. S.'s death, the curate accidentally came under my notice, and I indirectly elicited from him that he had always been ignorant of the reason which had made Sir L. S. choose him for the living, no two human beings being more unlikely to have the slightest sympathy existing between them.)

Lefevre mentioned to me many similar incidents, but as some I

afterwards met with myself strongly resembled them, I will not waste time by describing those he related to me.

Of course travelling by diligence we had but little time to see the different towns through which we passed, much to my regret, as I wished to have stopped at Pavia. However, before leaving Italy, I had an opportunity afforded me of seeing that city. We arrived at Milan in the afternoon of the following day, and took up our abode at Reichmann's Hotel, at that time much frequented by the officers of the Austrian garrison. Before the time for the *table d'hôte*, Lefevre conducted me to the Duomo, and two or three other principal objects in the city, and we then returned to the hotel.

Dinner over, Lefevre proposed we should go to the theatre. At that time there were two theatres in Milan, the Cannobiana and the Carcano, the former giving Italian comedy and ballet, the latter only operas. On the evening of our arrival the Carcano was open, and the performance advertised was the first two acts of Bellini's opera of "I Capuletty," and the third by Vaccai. To this theatre we went, and there I had another love-attack, which, though it was one of a very innocent description, had circumstances connected with it which remained indelibly fixed on my mind. At first sight I fell desperately in love with the prima donna, if the soprano of that opera really bears the title, but I believe it belongs to the contralto. Juliet was a lovely girl, with a clear beautiful voice, which she managed most artistically. I was on the point of saying that Romeo's love for her was trifling when compared with my own, but the confession would be an absurdity, for the two lovers "hated with a hate known only on the stage." This feeling was evidently occasioned by the animosity of Romeo, who, finding Juliet a far greater favourite with the public than herself, took every opportunity in her power to spite her rival. This was apparent to all, though few seemed to interest themselves in the matter, jealousy of the kind being very common in the theatrical profession. At the same time it made Juliet still more interesting in my eyes, and I believe did her no harm with the public at large.

Lefevre had secured for us the stage box on a level with the actors, so that we not only saw everything going forward on the stage itself, but in the wings as well. I certainly at first sight was much struck with Juliet, and she evidently noticed me. In fact, the occult sympathy which exists between lovers, began, I am fully persuaded, to pass between us before the end of the opera. She evidently detected that I admired her, and I felt that she understood my feelings, and was pleased with them. So marked, indeed, was the glance she gave at our box, when, after the opera, she was called on the stage to make her obeisance to the audience, that Lefevre noticed it, and told me, as we quitted the theatre, that I had made a conquest there that evening.

Lefevre, I should remark, had paid but little attention to the performance. In fact, he seemed as a rule totally unimpressible to the charms of music, while greatly alive to those of the ballet, and that, be it understood, solely from an artistic point of view, as, from all I could learn, he had formed but few intimacies among the members of the corps. This was clearly visible the following evening when we visited the Cannobiana. He was then much interested in the ballet, his eyes never quitting the stage during the whole of the time, unless, perchance, to call my attention to some beauty or defect which he saw. To say the truth, I began to get a little tired of his criticisms. All appeared to me beautiful and graceful, and it was somewhat annoying to have these illusions destroyed. The next evening we again took our box at the Carcano, and Juliet had hardly made her appearance on the stage, when I noticed her eyes turned towards us. The performance went off in as satisfactory a manner as on the former evening, and she evidently noticed me as emphatically as before. I may say that during a whole fortnight, on every representation of the opera, I was present in the box, and on each occasion my admiration for the fair Juliet increased. I felt, though without anything more reliable to go upon than the glances she occasionally gave me, that my affection was not without return. At last I explained to Lefevre that I should like to be introduced to my fair Juliet. He told me there would be no difficulty in the matter, and took me round the stage for that purpose. But alas! a great difficulty arose. Juliet only spoke Italian, and I knew but little of that language. Possibly Juliet might have overlooked that circumstance, or kindly have taught me her own language, but with my keen sense of the ridiculous, the idea of making love in a language of which I scarce knew a score of sentences, seemed to me so absurd, that I gave it up altogether, and contented myself with feasting my eyes on her from my box. Night after night found me still in the same place, and each night I admired Juliet more than the previous one. She was tall, thin, pretty, and graceful, and her girlish figure contrasted most favourably with that of Romeo, who was evidently expecting soon to be a mother.

Romeo appeared to notice my partiality for Juliet, and by way of annoying her, first attempted to attract my attention from her by what is technically termed "playing" at my box; but finding that fail, she changed her tactics, and adopted a plan which could only have entered the imagination of a vindictive woman, and that woman an Italian actress.

The very evening she carried into effect her detestable plot she appeared to be in particularly good spirits; she sang with great care and animation. But I do not know how it was that in her grand air, each time she repeated the words *La tremenda ultrice spada*, she gave a particularly significant look at me. All passed off well till

the third act, both Romeo and Juliet being very much applauded. The scene in the mausoleum of the Capulets opened. Romeo came on the stage evidently in high spirits, totally contrary to what his feelings should have been on the occasion. He wore his plumed hat even more rakishly than before, and his moustaches and imperial seemed to have acquired between the acts an additional coat of burnt-cork and grease.

The tomb was broken open, and Juliet appeared stretched as a corpse on the grave-stone within it. Romeo then entered into the spirit of the scene, and after singing his adagio extremely well, he sucked the poison from the ring, and casting his hat upon the stage, he rushed towards the apparently inanimate Juliet. Then clasping her head on each side with his hands, he gave her a long and passionate kiss. Juliet, awakened by his embrace, rose from her tombstone, and Romeo in terror sunk upon his knees, as if he had seen her spirit ; thus leaving Juliet in full view of the audience.

No sooner did Juliet stand erect, than the treason of which she had been the victim became fully apparent. The audience burst into a loud laugh, and, annoyed as I was, I could not refrain from joining in it. Poor Juliet, when she received Romeo's kiss, received at the same time an exact *fac simile* of his moustaches and imperial. No copying machine could have taken them off more perfectly. Her appearance was thoroughly absurd. She was immediately aware of the fact, and of course was dreadfully annoyed. She turned mechanically towards me as if for consolation, and found me laughing too. The poor girl looked reproachfully at me for a moment, and then placing her hands upon her face burst into tears. The audience immediately applauded her greatly, and the performance abruptly terminated.

I went home that night thoroughly annoyed and ashamed. My behaviour appeared to me both unkind and ungentlemanly, and I determined the next night to make amends for my unworthy conduct. I then applauded everything she did, but it was useless, for she did not honour me with a single glance. Three or four successive nights I was in my place, but Juliet was inexorable. For several nights I attended the theatre with no better success, till at last the performances were brought to a close by the premature confinement of Romeo. During my stay in Milan I saw nothing more of Juliet ; but some two years afterwards I met her and her mother walking on the ramparts at Modena. Her mother evidently recognised me, and called Juliet's attention to my presence. Not the slightest change however, came over her countenance, although no doubt she saw me. As I passed them I took off my hat to her, but she took no notice of my salutation, but, acting admirably, appeared to think it was some one else I was addressing. I met her no more, but my behaviour to poor Juliet has always weighed heavily upon

my mind. Although I may have committed many far heavier sins, which have long since been forgotten, my unworthy behaviour to poor Juliet that evening remains as fresh on my mind as at the moment it occurred.

XII.

LEFEVRE remained in Italy for about a month or six weeks. He did not reside in Milan during the whole of the time, but made it his head-quarters, occasionally visiting, for two or three days at a time, at Bergamo, Brescia, Modena, Pavia, and other towns, where he thought it likely he might be able to pick up a talented dancer at a moderate price. When in Milan we remained excellent friends, attending one or other of the theatres open every evening; and thanks to his knowledge and experience of the stage, in a very short time I became so completely *au fait* in matters of the kind that, had I thought fit, I was able to act the impresario myself. To speak candidly, on more than one occasion during my residence in Italy such an idea did enter my head, although I never carried it into practice. I also admit that I had now lost all wish to commence the study of the law, if in fact any real wish for it ever existed, for now, when I think coolly over the matter, I believe my determination to adopt the law as a profession arose considerably more from its giving an honourable status in society than from any real love I bore it.

During my residence in Milan I remained at Reichmann's Hotel—indeed, I took a great liking to many of the guests I met there. Altogether, it hardly came up to our modern ideas of an hotel, for although travellers passing through Milan often stopped there, it partook rather more of the nature of a club-house for officers in the Austrian service. I formed the acquaintance of many of these, and a more gentlemanly or more accomplished body of men, I think I never met with. Among them also were several of my own countrymen, officers holding appointments in (I think) the 7th Regiment of Hungarian Hussars, of which the Duke of Wellington was colonel. Many of them tried to inoculate me with a love for a military life, but not with any success, beyond the fact that I used to attend with them the rooms of a celebrated fencing-master, where I myself took lessons, as the immediate neighbourhood of Milan, or its streets when once known, offered but little temptation for exercise. I may say without vanity that in a few months I became an expert swordsman—certainly with the sabre, which was the principal weapon studied by the officers in the Austrian service. The use of the sabre was also much affected by the Milanese gentleman, why, at first, I hardly knew, but I afterwards, to my sorrow, found out the cause—it was the weapon principally used in duels, which were then

of frequent occurrence between the Milanese gentlemen and the Austrian officers.

Although my time was passed in idleness in Milan, it would have been impossible to call me lazy, for, apart from fencing, which I studied assiduously, I also applied myself earnestly to acquire the Italian language. Tassani, my teacher, was a young law student of Pavia, who had just left the University. He was an amiable, kind-hearted, talented young fellow, about my own age. His parents, though highly respectable, were poor, and by way of maintaining himself, as he was too young to obtain any briefs, he gave lessons in the Italian language to several French and English students, all of whom esteemed him very highly. As he gave me two lessons a day, it may easily be imagined I made rapid progress in the language. One circumstance in Tassani's behaviour puzzled me extremely. When he came to give me his lesson he always rushed upstairs into my room with so much celerity that he was generally quite out of breath, and left it again in the same rapid manner. If I met him in the street and attempted to speak to him, he always appeared in a great hurry and excused himself, although when in my room he would converse volubly enough. He seemed shy of receiving any civility at my hand, and frequently as I asked him to dine with me at the *table d'hôte*, on every occasion he refused, always urging some excuse, and this so pertinaciously that I was exceedingly puzzled, for evidently his reasons were invented on the spur of the moment. However, I became tired of continually giving him invitations which were not accepted, so I determined to invite him no more, although my esteem for him in no way diminished.

At last a circumstance occurred which necessitated my asking Tassani for an explanation. One evening when passing the Café Martini I saw him seated at one of the tables in front of the building in conversation with some Milanese gentlemen. His eye evidently caught mine, but instead of replying to my salutation, he pretended not to see me, and kept his eye fixed on the table conversing with his friends. This nettled me so much that I determined not to pass it unnoticed, so advancing towards him, I put my hand on his shoulder, and addressed some casual remark to him in a familiar manner. He appeared somewhat surprised, and even annoyed, and rising from his seat, he said in a courteous tone of voice, "Will you have the kindness to excuse me, as I wish to speak to a friend inside?" The others at the table took no notice, and I went away.

The next morning when Tassani called to give me his lesson, with considerable coolness in my manner I asked for an explanation of his conduct the day before. He civilly told me there would have been no occasion for me to have put the question, as he could easily understand I was offended, and he intended to explain himself unasked.

"The fact is," he said, "with your light hair and fair complexion,

soldierly look, and continually frequenting the society of the Austrian officers, you are set down by the Milanese as holding a commission in the army."

"In what manner would it concern them," I inquired, "even were their conclusion correct? I should have been a member of as honourable a body of gentleman as any I know."

"Granted," he replied; "for as far as honourable conduct goes, I admit you to be right. But if you intend remaining any length of time in Milan, you must select either Austrian or Milanese society. There can be no mixture."

"And why not?" I asked.

"Simply because it is impossible to imagine in this world a more deadly hatred existing between two classes of human beings than the Austrians and Milanese. I am very glad you have spoken to me on the subject," he continued, "for now we shall understand each other. I have a great respect for you and your talents, but, as long as you remain in this hotel and associate with Germans, it will be impossible for me to be on terms of friendship with you abroad, much as I esteem you. I will tell you candidly more than this. The money I receive for the lessons I give you is of great importance to me—more so than you perhaps would imagine—but rather than associate with you when we meet in the streets or public thoroughfares, I would cease my lessons altogether."

Although much surprised at Tassani's language, I could not do otherwise than compliment him on his candour. I told him I should be content with his latent good feeling, under condition that he promised, if we met in any other town, our friendship might be open and unreserved. To this he agreed, and we commenced the lesson. In the evening I mentioned the circumstance to Lefevre, who seemed by no means surprised at it.

"The fact is, I suspect," he said, "that it is the state of Tassani's finances that has driven him to give you lessons at all in this hotel, for every time he enters, and is seen by any of his acquaintances, a suspicion arises in their minds that he is an Austrian spy."

"But he has never once spoken to me on any political subject," I remarked.

"No matter," said Lefevre. "Less cause than Tassani has given for a suspicion of the kind has brought on a duel among the Milanese themselves. As I know an immense number of people here in Milan, I will give out to all those who are likely to chatter most at the *spezarias* or cafés, that you are an Englishman, and not in any manner whatever connected with Austria or Austrian politics, that you are a friend of mine, a great admirer of theatres, and only here to amuse yourself. I have no doubt you will then find that any unpleasant feeling, if it has at all arisen, will soon vanish; although you

cannot expect to enter into any Milanese society as long as you remain in Reichmann's Hotel."

I should mention that besides the German officers whose acquaintance I had made, I was also on terms of intimacy with two English gentlemen, engineers, residing in Milan. One of them possessed immense silk works in the Pian d'Erba, a lovely spot half way between the towns of Como and Lecco. Occasionally I visited him there, and anything more beautiful than the scenery it would be impossible for the imagination to conceive. Although an Englishman, he was an excellent Italian scholar; and in the immediate neighbourhood of the silk works resided several wealthy Milanese families by whom he was much esteemed, so that I had abundant society as well as practice in speaking the Italian language. On one occasion I remained for two months there, and when I returned to Milan I took up my residence in an Italian hotel. Thanks to the acquaintance I had formed in the Pian d'Erba I was not now so completely tabooed by the Milanese as before, although I still perceived they looked on me with considerable shyness. Somewhat annoyed at this circumstance I became more intimate than ever with the Austrian officers, and continued in their fencing class, till few among them were better swordsmen than myself. For what earthly purpose beyond the advantage of exercise I laboured so hard, I am now unable to divine. I continued my lessons also with Tassani, and the more I saw of him the more I liked him. As he was no longer in danger of meeting any Germans, he now frequently dined with me at the *table d'hôte*, and a strong intimacy sprung up between us.

I will not detain the reader with any account of my first twelve-months' residence in Italy; in fact, it would be impossible. The time now seems to me to have passed like a delicious dream without continuity, and yet hardly any circumstance was connected with it that was not pleasant. During the year I principally resided in Milan, visiting occasionally the surrounding towns. Tassani and myself were by this time warm friends. He also was passionately fond of the theatre, though our tastes as to the particular performances were somewhat different. My delight was in a good opera, and the ballet also afforded me much pleasure. For tragedy or comedy I had less respect, and this arose from several causes. In the first place, the frequent habit of changing the performance, the same piece rarely being played more than two nights in succession, never allowed the actors to identify themselves thoroughly with their parts, and they showed great indifference to learning them by heart. And indeed it would have been difficult for them to have done so, for the *répertoire* of an Italian dramatic company, for merely one season, contained in it such an immense variety of subjects as totally precluded their arriving at perfection in any. The prompter, instead of performing his duties, as in an English theatre, by merely following the actors

with the manuscript in his hand, and assisting them when in fault, positively read the whole piece in advance of them, and that in a sufficiently loud key as to be frequently heard by the whole house. Again, another objectionable feature was the affected, conventional tone in which they spoke, certainly different from real life, which to me, when I began to thoroughly understand the language, had frequently a very ludicrous effect.

What greatly surprised me was that Tassani did not appear to notice these defects, but would listen evening after evening with the greatest delight to the performance. One day I spoke to him on the subject, and informed him of the great superiority of our manner of performing plays in England, where an actor identifies himself with his part in such a manner that you would hardly distinguish his performance from real life.

"As far as your objection goes to the continual change of performance," said Tassani, "and the uncertainty of the actors in their parts without the continual aid of the prompter, I perfectly agree with you. Possibly also you may not be wrong in your opinion as to the stilted and affected tone of our actors and actresses. Still, with us it is conventionally admitted to be good. Although I consider it to be absurd, I am now so used to it that I think nothing of it. But are you English," he continued, "free from blame in the matter? I once, a few years since, passed a week in Paris, where there was an English play, and in it I saw some of your celebrated actors. Frankly, they thoroughly disgusted me. I had read several translations of Shakespeare in the Italian language, and indifferent as they might have been, I had conceived an immense respect for the habitual natural language in which they were written, elevated by beautiful ideas and elegant similes, which, if expressed in a natural tone of voice, would have been perfectly delightful. But upon the stage there appeared throughout the whole an exaggerated accent and artificial tone that quite disappointed me. At the same time I noticed that the audience—the English portion at least—seemed to consider it perfectly adapted to the occasion."

Of course, as an Englishman, and with English ideas, I could not agree with Tassani's objections, though I said nothing on the point; but contented myself with asking him why, if he and other educated individuals, considered the affected tone used by the tragic actors as objectionable, they did not attempt to introduce a new fashion.

"You don't know the difficulty there would be in doing anything of the kind," said Tassani, laughing. "I was vain enough some two or three years since to think such a thing possible, and tried to furnish an example, but hardly succeeded in doing so, and I was, moreover, the cause of raising considerable ill-will in my family."

"How was that?" I inquired.

"My father had a brother, a physician," replied Tassani, "who

such an union a *mesalliance*. However, she made him an excellent wife, and things passed off smoothly enough. His wife, of course, quitted the stage on her marriage, but she always continued her love for the old profession, which she entered into with the spirit of an artist. When I was a boy, she used to assist me in getting up a paste-board theatre, and aid me with the puppets, I being of course the mouth-piece of all the male actors, and Clelia, the daughter, that of the female. As we grew older the performances began to be somewhat more ambitious. We would then play scenes from Alfieri and others of our best writers. Clelia had a remarkably sweet voice, and her mother, who held also that the conventional tone used in our tragedies and comedies was objectionable, taught her to recite her part in a natural manner. Later we put aside the puppets, and played scenes from different pieces, taking the parts ourselves. My aunt was always present at the time, combining in her own person not only the parts of audience and prompter, but frequently herself reciting portions of the play, when a third character should have been on the stage. I must frankly admit that I was guilty of concealing these performances from my father and mother, who, although, like most other Milanese, passionately fond of the theatre, held its artists in but little estimation.

"All went on well till Clelia was about seventeen years of age, when her father died suddenly, and, on examining his affairs, he was found to be little better than insolvent; his widow and child, in fact, hardly receiving sufficient to purchase mourning. The question then arose, what was to be done? My father's income and my expenses at college placed it practically out of his power to assist them, except in a most moderate manner, not sufficient for the bare maintenance of life. It was therefore necessary that the widow should do something to maintain herself and child. But, alas! what could she do? She had been but a comedy actress, and was now too old for that, and consequently it would have been useless for her to have returned to her old profession. For some time she remained in doubt which course to take, when Clelia, who dearly loved her mother, asked permission to try her own career on the stage. 'I feel, dear mother, I should succeed if I did,' she said. 'And I should then have the satisfaction of returning, in some degree, the affection I have received from you.'

"Her mother," continued Tassani, "would willingly have entertained the idea, but feared the displeasure of my father, and I was consulted on the occasion. I, enthusiastic for the theatre, advised Clelia to carry out her determination, and her mother also gave her permission. When, however, the subject was mooted to my father, he flew into a violent passion, and said that if such a course were adopted,

all further acquaintance should cease between him and the widow. He also blamed me severely for the part I had taken in the matter, as he had heard I approved of Clelia adopting the stage as a profession, and the result was that a violent quarrel took place between us, the first, and I am happy to say the only one, which has ever disturbed the good feeling which should exist between father and son."

"And how has your cousin succeeded?" I asked.

"Not as well as might have been wished," he said. "She has, however, done so sufficiently to encourage her to continue in her profession. She would have succeeded better, in fact, had it not been for the gigantic task she took upon herself of introducing a more natural tone of voice on the stage. Unfortunately she has rather delicate health, and her voice is hardly strong enough to fill a large theatre, so up to the present time she has not had an opportunity of making a thoroughly good *début*."

"Where is she now?" I inquired.

"Somewhere in the south of Italy," he replied. "The last time I heard from her she was at Rome, and seeking an engagement in some country town. When you go southward I will give you a letter to her, and then you will be able to judge for yourself whether I have in any manner over-stated her ability and attractions.

Tassani now introduced me to his father and mother; and although they received me with great kindness, I cannot say I found them an amiable couple. On more than one occasion I spent the evening with them, when the conversation, as usual in Milanese society, principally turned on the opera. As an Englishman of course I felt interested in politics, but Tassani's father, with the natural Italian suspicion, declined speaking on a subject which might be likely to implicate him in any manner. On noticing this to Tassani he told me that I could hardly imagine how trifling a remark would sometimes get an innocent person into trouble, and that his father was already suspected by the Austrian government of being ill-affected towards them. I remarked that no doubt it was a subject of extreme annoyance that the governors of Italy differed from the people not only in nationality but in modes of thought. At the same time, I said, the Italians appeared to me to have but little to complain of. During the time I had been in Milan, not one single despotic action had come under my notice, and their laws and regulations could not be so very objectionable, seeing there was not a more flourishing town in Italy, and perhaps in Europe, than Milan.

"It's all very well," said Tassani, "for you Englishmen to speak about the liberty you enjoy here; but because no restrictions are placed on you, it does not follow we are free from them. I tell you that the tyranny of these Austrians is insupportable; and not only that, but their means of exercising it are full of such petty malice, that it adds contempt to our hatred. I will give you a specimen of what

occurred to me, and hundreds of similar instances might be quoted. In a certain public procession in which the military took part, there was an Austrian Colonel of the Lancers whose uniform, absurd enough in itself, fitted him so badly as to excite the laughter of many of the bystanders. I remarked to a friend as the officer passed us, that 'he looked more like a *pulcinello* than anything else.' The next morning, I had a polite invitation, really worded in a most civil manner, to attend at the police court. I presented myself, and was received by the Chief, a Tyrolese, with great courtesy. He much regretted, he said, having troubled me, but he had received information that I had uttered a disrespectful remark concerning the Austrian army the day before, and he trusted I should be able to prove that the information was erroneous. I candidly admitted the remark I made, but insisted that it related solely to the officer in question, and that I did not mean any intentional disrespect to the Austrian service. 'Well, I'm very pleased to hear you say so,' he said. 'That is no very great fault certainly. At the same time I must compare your reply with the accusation, and, until that is finished, I am sorry to say I must detain you, but it will only be for a very short time.' I was then removed to a cell in the prison of St. Margharita, where I remained for one fortnight, not allowed even to communicate with my friends or parents, who, as you may naturally suspect, were most anxious at my absence. The Chief then sent for me again, and, receiving me with great urbanity, said, he was pleased to find my statement had been correct; and, after regretting the inconvenience he had put me to, said he would detain me no longer."

"Do you mean to say that occurrences of that kind are frequent here?" I inquired.

"Not only here," replied Tassani, "but all over Lombardy and Venetia. Such cases might be quoted by hundreds, so you may easily believe the hatred we bear the Austrians is not without provocation."

A few days afterwards a circumstance occurred which gave me an insight into the rigour of the Austrian policy in Italy. I had heard that a copy of the 'Times' newspaper might, on payment, be seen in Milan at the Government Gazette office, that journal being prohibited by the police at the *cafés*. I immediately offered to become a subscriber, but they told me they could not accept my subscription without permission from the police, and that if I called the following day no doubt it would be received. I did so, and my subscription being paid, I was conducted down a long passage to a door opening into a room, the whole furniture of which consisted but of a table, an inkstand, and two or three chairs. On the table lay a file of the 'Times' newspaper. My conductor told me I could remain as long as I pleased, and when I was tired of reading, if I rang the bell he would open the door and let me out. He then quitted the room, and, locking the door after him, I was left to myself.

Some time later I had a specimen of Austrian rule in Italy, which, in my opinion, was about as infamous and tyrannical an act as could possibly be imagined. Indeed, after it was over, the Austrian police forbade any mention being made of it in the few non-official journals then published in Italy. In the Piazza d'Armi is a large amphitheatre, open to the sky, built by the first Napoleon, something after the model of the Coliseums of Rome and Verona, though the walls were not so high. A *spectacle* was advertised to be performed in it, called *L'Incendio de Rokeby*, professedly taken from Sir Walter Scott, although there was little in the performance to justify the assertion. The place was crowded with spectators. There was a castle made of painted canvas on a wooden frame in the centre, which was to be defended by one body of actors and attacked by the other. The performance, however, was of the most unsatisfactory description — everything went wrong. All the manœuvres were badly performed, the fireworks by which the castle was to be burnt down would not explode properly, and the whole affair was a miserable failure. The audience, however, put up with it good-naturedly for some time, but their patience at last gave way. After expressing their disapprobation in a most emphatic manner, a number of young scapegraces determined, as the castle had not been destroyed, they would do it themselves, and descended into the arena for that purpose, the great mass of spectators — especially the women — quitting the place during the time. Tassani's mother and a female friend having been sitting near me, I conducted them to the door, and, after wishing them good evening, returned to witness the termination of the affair. To my surprise, on entering the *loggione*, in which I had been seated, I saw that the whole of the top circle of the walls had, during my absence, been lined with a row of soldiers. No notice was taken of them, however, by the crowd in the arena, not a tithe of whom were engaged in the destruction of the canvas castle, but merely looking laughingly on. Suddenly there was an order given by the commanding officer for the soldiers to fire, who levelled their muskets on the crowd in the arena, and fired a volley at them. The crowd, terror-struck, immediately rushed out of the building, but not before they had received a second volley from the military, who, not even content with that, turned and fired at the fugitives as they made their way through the trees that surrounded the arena. How many were killed I know not, but in the arena alone, I certainly saw at least thirty of the spectators who had been shot down, and that for being mixed up in an affair which a dozen London policemen would not have drawn their truncheons to put down. The next morning the Government Gazette merely noticed that the evening before a slight disturbance had arisen at the arena, but the military having been called in, it was soon and effectually quelled. God knows it was!

WANTED, AN ENGLISHMAN.

It is not always that an appeal for sympathy, or at lowest for candour, when one is about to attempt a difficult and delicate task, meets with a favourable response. But I have some, though not strong, hopes that I shall meet with a little both of sympathy and candour on the present occasion. This is a very commonplace opening, and reads something like an electioneering address, but the matters to which I am about to refer demand so much caution that I am afraid of pitching the key too high.

It is part of the misfortune of the case that any such caution should be necessary, and that a public writer should have to appeal specially to any one's candour in such a matter. And how have we, within the last twenty years, arrived at the state of things which creates such a misfortune? That would be a dreary story to tell; but the fact is, to put things shortly, we have arrived at a state of flogged-up public opinion and an anarchy of fanatical combinations and chance majorities, each majority of the hour snatching what it can, and justice being hustled out of sight with its hat over its eyes. In spite of our free and enlightened press, I believe there never was a time—making the due allowances all round—when it was so difficult, I will not say for minorities, but for the real majorities to get a hearing. Nor is there any paradox here. It is the organization of cliques, the quarrels of vested interests, and the transitionary state of the press which for the time give chance majorities, well worked, the upper hand, whatever the real majority might have to say in a given case. And there are certain "cries" which, in such a state of things, can be worked so as to intimidate nearly everybody. Public morality is a cry of that order; and I only refrain from mentioning others because my field of comment is already quite wide enough. We have now come definitely to that pass that when once the cry of public morals is raised the simplest rules of common justice are forgotten. Juries have lost their heads. Nobody can admire our Judges more than I do, but even they have too often shown of late that they are a little intimidated by what is in the air. Anything more scandalously immoral than the verdicts which have in increasing numbers been given of late years in breach-of-promise cases can hardly be imagined; yet juries give them in the interests of what they suppose to be public morality. In the last case of the kind I happened to read, there was as clear a case of conspiracy to extort money from the victim as ever sent a scoundrel to prison, yet the damages were given. In actions of another kind, which we need not

describe, the verdicts have been monstrous. I saw in some newspaper the other day, à propos of the well-known French prints, Phryne and Penelope, that the superiority of English to French morality was shown by the fact, that while Phryne sold better in France, Penelope sold better in England. The remark was a profoundly stupid one, for the Penelope picture is a poor insipid thing without the Phryne at hand to throw light upon it. But that is not my point, which is this:—If the English genius is so fond of Penelope, why does it award such tremendous damages to Phryne as to create a class of adventuresses who trade on the morality of juries? One or two of the judges have set their faces against this sort of thing—a little; but I remember an instance in which one of the best of them peremptorily shut the mouth of the defendant, who was under examination by counsel, when he was just beginning a most important statement in his own behalf. He was told by the judge to forbear, for decency's sake, and his counsel had the moral cowardice to acquiesce. The statement the witness was about to make, was such, that a jury, believing it, would have been mad to give the plaintiff a farthing: but what was the effect of this interference of the judge in the name of "decency"? Just this:—A thick-headed jury thought to themselves, "Why, what a wicked man this must be when the judge calls him indecent!" and they gave the hussy swinging damages; though the defendant had offered her fully as much as on the severest view of the case she could claim, and though there was a moral certainty that this adventuress would better the instruction thus afforded to her, and go and lay out her damages in flying at still higher game.

I request the reader to notice here, and to bear in mind all the way through this paper (for I hope he will read it through), that the writer of these lines is no cynic in these or any other matters. No one can have a loftier ideal of domestic purity than I; no one a more passionate respect for women; no one a stronger feeling of privacy and self-respect in all such matters. But I do not believe in the promotion of what is called public virtue by methods which tend to the submerging of common justice. And I am about to refer to two recent cases at the Middlesex Sessions,—one in particular,—in which we find a defendant actually pleading guilty against the advice of his counsel, against the clear law of the case, against the pretty plainly expressed opinion of the judge himself. I confess I could scarcely believe my eyes when I read the story. Is this England? What were this defendant's notions of his duty to his countrymen? And if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? Mr. Torrens and Mr. Vernon Harcourt, and a few others, have had in the House of Commons to blush for the London School Board (for getting a clause into their act throwing the burden of proof, in a certain respect, on the prosecuted person), and well they might.

But how deep are we to blush when Englishmen, innocent before the law, plead guilty under social intimidation?

There is an organization of informers which goes by the name of the Society for the Suppression of Vice. Now it is a good thing that vice should be suppressed, but it is not quite so good that the public conscience should be demoralized by a corporation of informers. True, some of the judges have had a good word for this precious corporation: but judges are not infallible, and sometimes they are ridiculous.* Above all, it must be remembered that they are, from the necessary cast of their minds and the nature of their pursuits, indifferent critics of questions of general public policy (it would be trite to refer to the frequent failure of lawyers as politicians or mere jurists); and, still more important, their views are, like those of doctors, pathological. They see the *diseased* cases, they are specialists; their minds have a "crick." I lay no stress whatever on the opinions of any of the judges who approve of the policy of encouraging organized gangs of informers, supported by voluntary contributions, to go about the world hunting up cases and setting the law in motion at their pleasure. Personally, I share Sydney Smith's doubts whether the law should not even put down with a strong hand any such Society.

It was several decades ago that Sydney Smith wrote in the *Edinburgh Review* an article attacking, with his usual spirit and candour, the Society for the Suppression of Vice. It was a worse than thankless task to write such an article, for what more easy to represent than that the man who objected to any proceedings of a Society that aimed at suppressing vice was himself a friend to vice and desirous that it should flourish and triumph? And in these days, when some of the judges have, as I have stated, expressed the opinion that the Society is doing a great deal of good (—so, no doubt, is typhoid fever, or why does Providence allow it?—), and when the critic who attacks the Society is neither a clergyman nor an Edinburgh reviewer,—a task of the same kind is still more thankless and even dangerous. Nevertheless, I shall invite the attention of honest and courageous Englishmen—for I hope there are a few of the breed yet left in the island—to a flagrant miscarriage of public justice for which the Society in question is partly answerable, though the gentleman whom they prosecuted was at least as much to blame. The judge, Mr. Sergeant Cox, and the counsel, who in one of the cases was Mr. Douglas Straight, M.P., had no choice, and, indeed, they both did what they could, little as it was, to give a better turn to the story. Let me

* The late Justice Willes is reported in a civil action to have made the following precious deliverance (it was a question of "necessaries" supplied to a married woman): "A piano is a necessary, because everybody plays the piano. But a guitar is not a necessary, because very few people learn the guitar. Neither is a gold pencil case a necessary; it is only good to lay about and to lose."

first quote a few passages from Sydney Smith's article in the *Edinburgh Review* :—

"Whatever may be said of the single and insulated informer, it is quite a new question when we come to a corporation of informers supported by large contributions. The one may be a good, the other a very serious evil ; the one legal, the other wholly out of the contemplation of law,—which often, and very wisely, allows individuals to do, what it forbids to many individuals assembled.

"If once combination is allowed for the suppression of vice, where are its limits to be ? Its capital may as well consist of 100,000*l. per annum*, as of a thousand : its numbers may increase from a thousand subscribers, which this Society, it seems, had reached in its second year, to twenty thousand : and, in that case, what accused person of an inferior condition of life would have the temerity to stand against such a Society ? *Their mandates would very soon be law ; and there is no compliance into which they might not frighten the common people, and the lower orders of tradesmen. The idea of a society of gentlemen, calling themselves an Association for the Suppression of Vice, would alarm any small offender, to a degree that would make him prefer any submission to any resistance. He would consider the very fact of being accused by them as almost sufficient to ruin him.*

"An individual accuser accuses at his own expense ; and the risk he runs is a good security that the subject will not be harassed by needless accusations,—a security which, of course, he cannot have against such a society as this, to whom pecuniary loss is an object of such little consequence. It must never be forgotten, that this is not a society for *punishing* people who have been found to transgress the law, but for *accusing* persons of transgressing the law ; and that, before trial, the accused person is to be considered as innocent, and is to have every fair chance of establishing his innocence. He must be no common defendant, however, who does not contend against such a society with very fearful odds ;—the best counsel engaged for his opponents,—great practice in the particular court and particular species of cause,—witnesses thoroughly hackneyed in a court of justice,—and an unlimited command of money. It by no means follows, that the legislature, in allowing individuals to be informers, meant to subject the accused person to the superior weight and power of such societies. The very influence of names must have a considerable weight with the jury. Lord Dartmouth, Lord Radstock, and the Bishop of Durham, *versus* a Whitechapel butcher or publican ! Is this a fair contest before a jury ?"

"A vast distinction is to be made between official duties and voluntary duties. The first are commonly carried on with calmness and moderation ; the latter often characterized, in their execution, by rash and intemperate zeal."

"It is hardly possible that a society for the suppression of vice can

ever be kept within the bounds of good sense and moderation. If there are many members who have really become so from a feeling of duty, there will necessarily be some who enter the society to hide a bad character, and others whose object it is to recommend themselves to their betters by a sedulous and bustling inquisition into the immoralities of the public. The loudest and noisiest suppressors will always carry it against the more prudent part of the community; the most violent will be considered as the most moral; and those who see the absurdity will, from the fear of being thought to encourage vice, be reluctant to oppose it.

"It is of great importance to keep public opinion on the side of virtue. To their authorized and legal correctors, mankind are, on common occasions, ready enough to submit; but there is something in the self-erection of a voluntary magistracy which creates so much disgust, that it almost renders vice popular, and puts the offence at a premium. *We have no doubt but that the immediate effect of a voluntary combination for the suppression of vice, is an involuntary combination in favour of the vices to be suppressed; and this is a very serious drawback from any good of which such societies may be the occasion; for the state of morals, at any one period, depends much more upon opinion than law; and to bring odious and disgusting auxiliaries to the aid of virtue, is to do the utmost possible good to the cause of vice.* We regret that mankind are as they are; and we sincerely wish that the species at large were as completely devoid of every vice and infirmity as the president, vice-president, and committee of the Suppressing Society; but, till they are thus regenerated, it is of the greatest consequence to teach them virtue and religion in a manner which will not make them hate both the one and the other. The greatest delicacy is required in the application of violence to moral and religious sentiment."

"The violent modes of making men good, just alluded to, have been resorted to at periods when the science of legislation was not so well understood as it now is; or when the manners of the age have been peculiarly gloomy or fanatical. The improved knowledge and the improved temper of later times push such laws into the background, and silently repeal them. A *Suppressing Society*, hunting everywhere for penalty and information, has a direct tendency to revive ancient ignorance and fanaticism, and to re-enact laws which, if ever they ought to have existed at all, were certainly calculated for a very different style of manners, and a very different degree of information."

"*Beginning with the best intentions in the world, such societies must in all probability degenerate into a receptacle for every species of tittle-tattle, impertinence, and malice. Men, whose trade is rat-catching, love to catch rats; the bug-destroyer seizes on his bug with delight; and the suppressor is gratified by finding his vice. The last soon becomes a mere tradesman, like the others; none of them moralize, or lament that their*

*respective evils exist in the world. The public feeling is swallowed up in the pursuit of a daily occupation, and in the display of a technical skill."**

So far Sydney Smith. It is not necessary to quote the polite sentences, with which, in order not to alarm the moralists too much, he concludes the article. He or the editor put them in out of timidity, and they mean nothing. Since his days, everybody is aware that, by an Act of Parliament known as Lord Campbell's Act, the law relating to the sale of books and pictures of a certain kind has been made much more stringent and more easy of application; and also that photography has made it very easy to multiply pictures of the kind referred to. The effect of Lord Campbell's Act has been just this:—It has been made increasingly difficult to carry on the old abominable trade in the old way, and it is now—so the friends of the Society tell us—"mainly carried on through the post-office"—that is to say, so far as its grosser forms are concerned. To any one not blinded by his fanaticism it would seem a strange subject for congratulation that a corrupting trade, formerly carried on within traceable limits and easily driven into corners, was now diffused *untraceably* and widely through the post-office. But fanatics in the application of criminal law, especially fanatics of *this* school, have always been a race by themselves, blind of one eye and half the other. It is quite possible, however, that they may have it in contemplation to introduce some changes in the law which may enable government officials to exercise detective functions at the post-office, and open our correspondence whenever they think proper.

But another effect of attempting to put down by law what law

* At the time Sydney Smith wrote, the suppression of cruelty to animals was part of the business of this Society. Since then, there has been a divarication of function; and any reader of blue-books may find a forcible illustration of this last remark of Sydney Smith's, in the evidence of the Secretary of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals given before Mr. Auberon Herbert's Committee of last session on the protection of Wild Birds. The terms of the Act in force "*include*" certain birds, and the intention (as well as the language to any honest mind) is perfectly plain. But it was the opinion of this Society that other birds ought to be protected by law; and what did they do? With that "*technical skill*" which Sydney Smith rightly says comes in such cases to supersede "*public feeling*" and sense of honesty, they set to work to see if the word "*include*" would not enable them to construe the Act in the sense that though birds A, B, C, and D, were *definitely* covered by its penalties, yet birds E, F, G, and so to Z, were by implication so covered. The Secretary narrated with perfect self-complacency the attempts the Society had made to get the Act thus construed, and the decision of Counsel (I fancy of the law officers of the Crown) against them. Now what would Mr. Whalley have said, if the Roman Catholics had tried thus to work an Act? Nay, what would commercial bodies or ordinary citizens have said, if a civil statute applying to commerce or taxation had been thus tampered with? Yet nobody seems to have thought that this was a highly immoral procedure, or to have reflected that to make out "*constructive*" offences is the way back to Star Chambers and the like.

cannot put down, has been in this case to diffuse in another shape the mischief complained of. I shall not stain these pages with the unpleasant adjectives which Lord Campbell's Act justly applies to pictures of a certain class,—pictures of elaborated ugliness which make cleanly and elegant minds wonder what anybody can see in them to admire;—but I shall pass on to say that it is obviously difficult to determine the point at which a picture comes within the incriminating definition of the law. This difficulty has been taken advantage of by professional persons of a certain class to produce and imitate pictures of a kind which no honest mind would say came under the Act; which women and children may and do look at without thinking any harm whatever (—we shall see by-and-by what the learned judge remarked—); but which to boys and men of ill-trained, ill-guarded, or over-apprehensive characters (over-apprehensive, I mean, in certain directions) are fraught with suggestions of a dangerous order. It has happened in the natural course of things that not a few of these pictures have had real grace and charm in them; and in some cases the figures of the ladies who, in more or less questionable costumes, have been made the subjects of the photographer's skill, have been of such beauty, that it may well be doubted whether the pictures have done any harm. Men who late in life take up a “suppressing” career of this kind, are usually men of strong and coarse passions, low views of what human nature is, and little poetic sensibility. It is not to them, then, that I speak, when I affirm on grounds of mere moral expediency that it is a fair open question whether some even of the justly incriminated pictures do not serve a useful purpose. *Non meus hic sermo*—I should decline to discuss the subject from the expediency point of view at all—but my observation of life enables me to state what others will be able to confirm and many will suspect as probable in the very nature of things,—namely, that large numbers of youths stop short at the pictures, who would otherwise go much farther afield. I cannot very well write more plainly; it is a difficult thing to write about at all, but the psychology of the case is, so far, not obscure to persons of ordinary character. In my young days, I was much looked up to by youths of my own standing, and had often to act, however unwillingly, as a kind of confessor to some of them. No one who knows human nature will hesitate to believe me when I record that it was by no means among the worst young men that I happened to find questionable works of art. I say *happened*, for, in truth, I knew no bad young men, and only youths who were capable of treating such matters with considerable respect would have ventured to ask my opinion about certain things which they had somehow got hold of. The opinion I very decidedly formed then, and which I still hold to, is that those certain things did in many cases act as stop-gaps in the interest of virtue, or at least correctness of life. I am, of course, not contending

that this is a desirable state of things. But I do contend that from the expediency point of view it is desirable that the incriminating line in these matters should be drawn by capable men; and I add that the very existence of a gap to stop is the result of the false notions and still more false policy of coarse, unpoetical fanatics such as give themselves *con amore* to the work of "suppressing." A youth brought up under my control would have no gap that wanted stopping. Science and high Art together would, under my care, have done so much for him that the "little game" of the mercenary low-art people would be spoiled for them beforehand.—To stop the mouths of impudent wits I may say that I am something more than a theorist in this matter, and know of what I affirm.

However, it is unfortunately true, that whereas some years ago mercenary low art was confined pretty much to certain tracks, in which, when caught, it was soon made to look *indisputably* hateful, it has of late years, under the pressure of the Society and the law, put on more or less decent attire, under cover of which it has immensely diffused itself.

That this diffusion of mercenary low art of a certain kind (a fact of which everybody who has looked at the photograph-shops must be aware) has been a real evil is certain. I believe it to have been a worse evil than the evils expressly aimed at by Lord Campbell's Act. Nor is that all, as we shall see in a moment. But, in the meantime, none of all this proves that the law ought to rush in and interfere; because there is the inevitable subsequent question,—Might we not, in doing a little good, do a much greater harm, and even hinder the *ultimate* attainment of our own objects; namely, the purification and sweetening of human life in its most sacred issues? To this question I should unhesitatingly answer,—Yes, we should. Take another case. If I were asked on my conscience what I believe to have been among the most frightful corruptors of the human mind and heart,—what particular corruptors of society have most frequently made me exclaim in anguish, *Can there be a good God?* I should name certain theological doctrines, and certain ecclesiastical ways of looking at things. I believe in my conscience, and do not doubt that a voice from heaven, could we invoke one, would declare—that certain so-called "religious" ways, of looking at social questions have been, and still are, incalculably worse hindrances to human well-being than all the coarse impulses that ever provoked societies to suppress vice. I believe that if persons of the stamp of these suppressors would only help, or, at least, would not hinder, the access of daylight to matters over which they now shut down the hatches, the daylight would prove itself the natural purifier and sweetener, and we should get rid, without unjust compulsion, of all this sewage.

But, believing all this, should I ever dream of asking the law to step in and suppress either the opinions or the social policy which I,

in my soul, believe to be among the worst curses of this poor bewildered world? I have not so learnt my faith in God and man. I would, I hope, stand to be cut in pieces before I would lift a finger or whisper a word with any such drift. In all matters in which the Evil need not hurt us unless we choose, I stand up for one rule,—Let the Good and the Evil fight it out. It is impossible to work any other rule without injustice to some one, and the Ruler of the world can dispense with our bungling. If He has not so arranged matters that this rule will work, then let us all perish. There is no Justice to judge any of us, no Love at the core of things, and the sooner the farce is played out the better.

I was going to say that persons who think thus and thus on these topics, have no reason for looking with indulgence upon these artistic performances of coarse persons, any more than upon the performances of the out-and-out sons of Belial. Far otherwise. *They block the way.* We believe (and, as I said before, I am no mere theorist in these matters, but a responsible flesh-and-blood father) that both Science and Art have things to say or do in certain matters which it is most important to get said and done in the broad, open daylight, by those who love the daylight, not by those who by nature love the darkness because their deeds are evil. And, I repeat it, these mercenary fellows stop the way. They confound all distinctions. It is quite certain their deeds are only fit for the darkness, and yet, in addition to the direct harm they do, they cast an evil shadow on things which desire to stand or fall in the sunshine. But, when once the ugly thing is done in the open, a fresh complication arises, and our honest cause (honest and pure of intent whether right or wrong) receives a fresh indirect injury. For we are, for a moment, perplexed; and we are certainly placed in a most invidious position.

And here I find I shall be compelled to invent a substitute for an ugly and noisome word used by the law.

We are, I say, placed in a most difficult position. If a thing is honestly [brutish] within the meaning of the Act, our policy probably is to object to the Act on principle, but to leave the particular criminal to his fate, without protest, because he richly deserves all he gets and worse. Our course is still clearer in some other cases. We look on with indignant disapproval (at least I do) when a respectable man, like Mr. Pulvermacher, is prosecuted for a harmless paragraph in a pamphlet of testimonials, or when certain things, which are positively useful to society, and others which are harmless, are put down by a straining of the law. *I am perfectly certain that I could, in an hour's conversation, satisfy any uncommitted man of common sense of the injustice and danger to the community involved in several prosecutions of the last few years, got up either by suppressors or medical experts.* There is not a bookseller in London who is safe—not one—if the law is to be carried out all round on the principle of "stretching,"

which ignorant and stupid fanaticism in some cases, and professional spite in others, have flogged into acceptance by magistrates. This may be thought exaggeration, but it is not. Even if it were, however, the bare idea of being at the mercy of fools like most of these suppressors, and knaves trading on virtue like the "professional" informer, is enough to sting and disgust any true Englishman whose skull is more than sixteen inches in circumference.

When we come, then, to the case of pictures which, though *admittedly* not [brutish] within the meaning of the law, are, admittedly, "neither agreeable nor modest," we are justly indignant to find the law strained by an organized body of informers in order to bring these objectionable things within its scope. For, first, law is law, and our very lives may hang upon its inviolability *from all sides*. And, secondly, where is the line to be drawn? For myself, I know perfectly well, that pictures which I should freely inspect in my home with my daughter on one side of me and any other maiden of eighteen on the other, and things which I should consider necessary parts of the education of children, would be condemned to the flames as [brutish] by the majority of the suppressors—even in the present mild stage of that peculiar self-education in fanaticism which all "suppressors" go through. We say, then, what next, and next, and next? The other day I was standing at a photograph-shop, when an elderly gentleman with a very fine face, and a girl whom I took to be his daughter or a country cousin, came up and fixed their attention upon a certain photograph which would clearly come within the line of incrimination which in the case of Mr. Moreton Thompson it has been sought to draw. And what did the old gentleman do? In the most absorbed manner, he went critically, using his finger, over the whole of the outlines of this female figure, the damsel following him, just as she would have followed a lecturer on geology in a class-room. They then went into the shop and bought that wicked photograph—they did—I saw them. Also, I went in and bought it myself. And it is now sticking up in a frame behind my chair, with "Little Bo-Peep" on one side and an illuminated text on the other. The illuminated text is, "Righteous art thou, O Lord, and true is thy judgment: thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness"—and the illumination is exquisite; but if we have any repetition of cases such as that of Mr. Moreton Thompson (to which I shall presently refer in detail) I shall, in some sceptical fit, pull down the text as very doubtful indeed, and leave the photograph in its place as the truer thing of the two. In the meanwhile I have to say to my son, "Look here, my boy! when I was your age, an Englishman's house was his castle. Now, a school-board officer can break into it at pleasure, and a duffer of a magistrate, or board of duffers, can decide whether the children of the most cultivated man in England are receiving 'efficient instruction' in terms of Clause 73

of the Education Act. I recommend you, my son, to quit the nest and live on an island in mid-ocean by yourself if you can find one ; or, by the time you are my age, the books you are allowed to have on your shelves, and the pictures on your walls, will be at the mercy of such men as the late Lord Haddo."

Almost every reader will agree with me,—at least after a moment's reflection,—that there is no question of conduct and manners upon which persons are so ready to dogmatise and sit in judgment on each other, as questions of modesty and propriety. But compare the English, the Germans, the French, the Italians, the Americans, the Scandinavians, the Turks. Compare the ancient Greeks, Dante, Goethe, the Brownings. Compare the standard of a policeman, a sculptor, an ordinary private gentleman, and an ordinary small shopkeeper. Consider (if you have the requisite coolness and requisite knowledge,—there is no rudeness in saying that any such appeal must be addressed to a small audience) the amazing phenomena presented in the Bible and classical literature. Allow its due weight to the fact that late scholarship has in some cases gone to upset verdicts which rabid and mistaken "Christian virtue" has for nearly two thousand years been taking for granted as passed once for all on some of the great men and women of antiquity. Consider that as late as Charles Lamb's youth women half-clad were flogged at the cart's tail in London. Consider the astounding changes which women under our own eyes suffer in their ordinary dress without any conscious or visible change in their general tone of moral feeling. Consider that men like Smollett and Steele could and did attack as indecent and demoralising (and I agree with them) a public-school practice which the most virtuous of clerical schoolmasters have always been foremost to defend. Consider that at Rugby the Sixth Form to a boy refused, on grounds of decency, to be present at a scene which Arnold thought it decent to enact.* Remember, if you know it, the dress, or undress, in which an Italian princess of spotless fame did not hesitate to sit as a model to Canova, within living memory. Consider that out of every dozen great men and women, from the creation till now, eight or ten have incurred the charge of indecency or immorality from some one. Consider, lastly, that I am perforce putting the facts at their very lowest, and that there are few even of studious and thoughtful persons who have the patience or the daring to look such things in the face all round. Consider, I say, these things, and you will, if you are candid, admit, not that there is no practical guidance in these matters, but that they are mainly matters of self-respect, which demand to be decided by men of a very different stamp from that of even the better class of the Suppressors. Questions of delicacy are questions

* Upon receiving a second summons, they came, like cowards as they were, but obstinately turned their faces to the wall, quite in the spirit of modern compromise.

upon which nearly all are ready to quarrel and dogmatise, but which require, for even approximate decision, much candour, varied knowledge, many-sided sensibility, and considerable vigour of brain.—Unhappily, there is this to be said also :—They are matters in which it is exceedingly easy to win at a dash and cheaply a fine reputation for high morality and beautiful zeal. Even writers of real faculty are not always able to resist the desire to rush in and try to make reputation on this footing. Unluckily for writers who make this attempt, the better sort of critical readers are extremely quick to see through half-hearted virtue of that order, and not easy to be conciliated by any after-pretences of literary liberality which may accompany such performances by way of tags.

Before I quote the newspaper report of the law-case which has provoked these comments, let me be permitted to give an extract or two from writers who cannot be accused of any of the levity which by dull persons might be laid at the door of Sydney Smith (Sydney Smith was, in truth, as his “Lectures on Moral Philosophy,” among other things, prove, a clear-headed and sound-hearted moralist of a very high order)—and first,

MR. RUSKIN, in “Time and Tide by Wear and Tyne,” page 84 :—
 “It is always necessary, in enacting strict law, to leave some safety-valve* for outlet of irrepressible vice. Nearly all the stern law-givers of old time erred by oversight in this ; so that the morbid elements of the State, which it should be allowed to get rid of in a cutaneous and openly curable manner, were thrown inwards, and corrupted its constitution, and broke all down.” This may naturally lead up to a passage from another writer, who is also above suspicion as a moralist.—

* There is another and more profoundly moral and humane reason for leaving a margin. So complicated is human life, and so short-sighted is the best legislation, that numerous cases must occur in which the application of a law *without* a margin would be cruel and unjust. Cases frequently happen in which excellent citizens and real friends of virtue do things—casually or continuously, by a mere lapse or by honest intent—things which it is not desirable that the law should sweep into its net of incrimination, but which, nevertheless, a law *without* a margin would have to deal with by public penalties of some kind. And besides this, there are cases of misfortune, including some blame, in which such publicity as necessarily attends the operation of the law in certain matters has a cruel effect, exceedingly unfavourable to virtue in the long run. What man of forty cannot recall a dozen or a score of cases where women were concerned, in which publicity would have broken up households, overthrown half-a-dozen lives, driven some women into the last depths of social degradation, and others into suicide, or lunatic asylums? Believing, as I do, that Mr. Lowe at the Home Office is the right man in the right place, I was glad to see him showing a firm front to the foolish fanatics who wanted the other day to extend Mr. Charley’s Act to cases in which a professional nurse took in only one child. And I hope Mr. Lowe will find time to look carefully at the new Registration measure which Earl Morley so complacently says will lessen infanticide, but which the majority of the persons that I have talked to about it think will have the contrary effect—and worse than that.

The good are very good, and the bad are very bad. The high tone of public sentiment, in many New England towns, and penetrating and almost inquisitorial character, either powerfully determines men to good, or chafes and embitters them. This especially true when, in certain cases, good men are so thoroughly intent upon public morality that the private individual has scarcely any choice left. Under such a pressure some men act in open wickedness out of spite, and some secretly; and the bottom of society was a clandestine war with the top."

And this may not less naturally introduce my last quotation, which will be from "Transatlantic Sketches," by GREVILLE JOHN CHESTER, B.A. (whom I take to be an English clergyman), Smith, Elder, & Co. 1869:—"Life and property are tolerably secure in New England and if, as Western men allege, the New Englanders are somewhat slow, they are at least free from crimes of open violence. more secret but no less detestable crimes the New Englanders unhappily prone; and the researches of Dr. Jesse Chickering, and others, prove that the descendants of the old Puritan families absolutely dying out of the land from the terrible frequency of crimes of * * * * and infanticide. (See Dr. Jesse Chickering's Report of the City Population of Boston, November, 1851, Boston Census of State of New York, 1865, by Dr. Franklin Hough; Registration Reports of Massachusetts; and a powerful article on this subject in 'Harper's Magazine,' February 1859.) New England and New York ladies think it 'fashionable' to have no children. 'Children,' says a writer in 'Harper's Magazine,' 'have come to be considered a care, a burden, and an expense, which it is thought must, at least to some extent, be dispensed with.' Dr. Chickering, after a careful analysis of the births and deaths in Boston in 1849 and 1850, states it to be a fact, that 'the whole increase of population arising from the excess of births over the deaths for those two years has been among the foreign population. . . . If, too, what is heard from inhabitants be true, even blacker crimes than these are rife in the New England community.'"

Now, I have no sympathy with Mr. Chester's special political and ecclesiastical leanings, and I have lived long enough to allow its force to the old rule,—“Believe nothing that you are told and only half what you hear.” But behind all this smoke there must be some fire, and Mr. Ruskin, Mr. Beecher, and Mr. Chester make up a thick fold cord, not easily to be broken, of moral anticipation, general statement, and detailed statement, all three pointing in one direction. What I personally, as an habitually minute and attentive observer, know of the disastrous effects of certain recent proceedings over here

in the way of "suppression,"—the diffusion in new shapes of the evil sought to be suppressed, and the cynical exasperation of those whom it was most desirable to make friends of,—I must, for obvious reasons, suppress. Suffice it to say, that it is by no means impossible that, in virtue of a pair of eyes, a memory, and a gift of putting facts together, I know more about these matters than the whole society of suppressors, and that I believe, as "a dying man speaking to dying men," they have done serious and for the present irremediable harm.

We will now pass on to the case of Mr. Moreton Thompson at the Middlesex Sessions, a few days ago.

"Mr. William Moreton Thompson, of Cockspur Street, was indicted, at the instance of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, for selling certain [brutish] photographs, and also with having a number of other photographs of a similar kind in his possession for the purpose of sale. Mr. Besley, instructed by Messrs. Collette and Collette, prosecuted; Mr. Mead appeared for the defendant, who pleaded guilty. Mr. Besley said in this case, after having stated the facts, he should ask that Mr. Thompson should be allowed to enter into his own recognisances to come up for judgment if called upon.

"He believed that Mr. Thompson was desirous of conducting his business in a proper manner; but a person who had charge of it had sold things which, although *perhaps not coming within the ordinary meaning of what was termed* [brutish] *were still neither modest nor agreeable; and therefore were held to come within the meaning of what was* [brutish], and, from the very character of them, tended to sap the foundations of morality. This was the first of a series of cases of this class, which was prosecuted by the Society for the Suppression of Vice, assisted by the police of the different divisions; and he (Mr. Besley) was authorised to say that Mr. Thompson had no wish whatever to countenance this traffic."

This is, in brief, the first stage of the business. Notice the phraseology. The pictures, though not within the meaning of the law, are, you will observe, to be "*held*" to be so, if the Society can induce a thick-headed jury to take that view. "Though the acts with which the defendant in this case is charged, do not perhaps come within the ordinary meaning of the words, forgery, theft, still, since they were not perfectly honourable as many gentlemen understand such things, we hope they may be held to be theft and forgery, and that the defendant, if convicted, may be held liable to penal servitude accordingly." How would that speech sound? Yet it is a mere tracing from the copy before us.

Now for the next step:—

"Mr. Mead, on the part of the defendant, said it was necessary for him to say but little, for when the case was at the police-court a

witness was called, and from his evidence it appeared that some time ago photographs of an improper character were seen by Mr. Thompson in his shop, and he instructed his assistant that he should on no account deal in such photographs for the future, but that order was disobeyed, and all such photographs were afterwards carefully concealed from his eye. The sale of them was continued by the assistant without his knowledge. *He (Mr. Mead) thought that Mr. Thompson had a good defence to this prosecution, as these photographs were not sufficiently [brutish] to come within the meaning of the Act, but defendant felt it would not be right on his part to take that course, and had therefore pleaded guilty to the indictment.* He was a man who had carried on a respectable business for twenty years, and there was not the slightest blemish upon his character."

Upon this I will only remark here that, judging from the photographs which I, like others, have seen in Mr. Thompson's shop, they were, beyond question, *not* within the meaning of the Act as it stands, though they were neither "agreeable nor modest," as the counsel for the prosecution stated. But the want of "modesty" was, in many cases, in the women's countenances only. Nobody that I am aware of (except a professional suppressor) would describe the bust known as the Clytie as immodest. Give the Clytie an impudent face, and the thing instantly becomes offensive. But, if that is to decide it, we have come at once to the *lex non scripta* of our much-quoted friend, the beadle, who took a man up for "looking lewd." Lord Campbell, indeed, was quite capable of introducing an Act to send a man to prison for "looking lewd;" but take it as you will, the Act is not yet in force, or even before Parliament. Let us pass on:—

"The judge said it appeared to him that, *with one exception, there was not a photograph amongst them that could not be found in every shop and on every drawing-room table in the kingdom.* Addressing Mr. Thompson, his lordship said:—"I shall now call upon you to enter into your own recognisances to come up for judgment if called upon. I am fully satisfied with your explanation; and there is no stain upon your moral character."

I shall at least have credit for candour here if I say that Serjeant Cox, supposing he said those very words, went a little too far. For "could not," say "might not," and for "every drawing-room table," substitute "*almost every drawing-room table,*" and you have the truth. No person of high taste would put some of these pictures on his table. But high taste is rare, and you might very well meet them in your next visit. Anyone, you or I, for example, might keep them in a corner as illustrations of "manners," and to call them [brutish] was a most impudent and unfair attempt to strain the law. But now let us hear Mr. Thompson:—

"Mr. Thompson said—I am quite satisfied with this expression of

your lordship's opinion ; and, contrary to the advice of my legal advisers, I pleaded guilty, because I objected to countenance what I could not entirely approve of, and I thank your lordship for this expression of your opinion. The required recognisances were then entered into, and the matter terminated."

A day or two afterwards, a Mr. King, of Chancery Lane (his case coming perhaps a shade nearer the just line of incrimination), was brought up, at the instance of the same gang of informers, and he also pleaded guilty, and was discharged on his own recognisances. In this case the judge again said there was nothing against the moral character of the defendant. But he went further. Evidently startled at this un-English spectacle of intimidation and moral cowardice, he said he *regretted that the case had not come before him in such a form that the [brutishness] or otherwise of the pictures could have been tried in a legal way.* These are strong words from a judge in such a case, and they must be taken to mean at least a portion of what I am now going to say, concerning what thus far happened.

What in the name of English fair play *ought* to have happened? I will tell you. The defendants ought, like honest men, to have pleaded Not Guilty (expressing any *regret* they pleased, and promising to withdraw some of the photographs as likely to do harm). An honest jury ought to have acquitted them both. And then—if it were legally possible, as I think it is,—they ought to have indicted the Society for conspiracy.

Just observe what Mr. Moreton Thompson took upon himself to do. It is impossible to say whether his logic or his moral courage failed him, but what he did was this: he took upon himself, by pleading guilty, the whole functions of judge and jury,—the interpretation of the law and the question of fact,—in a case in which his counsel advised him and the prosecuting counsel practically admitted, he had a legal defence to the indictment. Now, I say there is not an Englishman living who has not a right to stand up and complain that Mr. Thompson has by this act of his betrayed the interests of every man, woman, and child in the fair administration of the law, and opened the door for every kind and degree of intimidation at the hands of informers. It was quite open to Mr. Thompson to say this :—"These pictures were sold against my express orders, and without my knowledge. I think them calculated to do harm, and shall gladly see them destroyed, at whatever cost. I will join in any effort that may be made by good men, in combination or singly, to check these evils, so long as no public wrong is done. But I now stand here, an English citizen, to be judged by English law ; I hold in trust the interests of all my countrymen and countrywomen in the strict purity of the administration of justice. I am advised, and believe that the indictment got up by this powerful Society has not the law behind it ; and I plead Not Guilty." If he had done this, it

to propose a testimonial to Mr. Thompson in acknowledgment of his public spirit and good feeling, and also to propose the establishment among gentlemen of his profession of a Committee of Good Taste to keep the general body in order. As things stand at present, the photographs are gone—which is well, at least as to most of them. But a premium has been offered, in the name of the law, to any organisation of informers that likes a chance-triumph for a moral “fad” better than the general triumph of honesty and justice for us all. A stroke of business which was not particularly called for in these dark and dastardly days.

AN IRRECONCILABLE.

ANDRÉ LE CHAPELAIN.

(CLERK OF LOVE, 1170.)

A BALLAD TO VENUS OF THE COMING YEARS.

I.

QUEEN VENUS, round whose feet,
To tend thy sacred fire,
With service bitter-sweet
Nor youths nor maidens tire ;—
Goddess, whose bounties be
Large as the un-oared sea ;—

II.

Mother, whose eldest born
First stirred his stammering tongue,
In the world's youngest morn,
When the first daisies sprung ;—
Whose last, when Time shall die,
In the same grave shall lie :—

III.

Hear thou one suppliant more !
Must I, thy bard, grow old,
Bent, with the temples frore,
Not jocund be, nor bold,
To tune, for folk in May,
Ballad and virelai ?

IV.

Shall the youths jeer and jape,
" Behold his verse doth dote,—
Leave thou Love's lute to scrape,
And tune thy wrinkled throat
To rounds of 'Flesh is Grass,'"—
Shall they cry thus and pass,

V.

And the sweet girls go by?
 "Beshrew the greybeard's tune!—
 What ails his minstrelsy
 To sing us snow in June!"
 Shall they too laugh, and fleet
 Far in the sun-warmed street?

VI.

But thou, whose beauty bright,
 Upon thy wooded hill,
 With ineffectual light
 The wan sun seeketh still;—
 Woman, whose tears are dried,
 Hardly, for Adon's side,

VII.

Have pity, Erycine!
 Withhold not all thy sweets;
 Must I thy gifts resign
 For Love's mere broken meats,
 And suit for alms prefer
 That was thine Almoner?

VIII.

Must I, as bondsman, kneel
 That, in full many a cause,
 Have scrolled thy just appeal—
 Have I not writ thy Laws?—
That none from Love shall take
Save but for Love's sweet sake;—

IX.

That none shall aught refuse
To Love of Love's fair dues;—
That none bright Love shall scoff
Or deem foul shame thereof;—
That none shall traitor be
To Love's dear secrecy;—

X.

Avert, avert it, Queen!
 Debarred thy listed sports,
 Let me at least be seen
 An usher in thy courts,
 Outworn, but still indued
 With badge of servitude.

XI.

When I no more may go,
 As one that walks on air,
 To string notes soft and slow
 By maids found sweet and fair ;—
 When I no more may be
 Of Love's blithe company ;—

XII.

When I no more may sit
 Within thine own pleasance,
 To weave, in sentence fit,
 Thy golden dalliance ;
 And other hands than these
 Shall write thy soft decrees ;—

XIII.

Leave me at least to sing
 About thine outer walls,
 To tell thy pleasuring,
 Thy mirth, thy festivals ;
 Yea, let my swan-song be
 Thy grace, thy sanctity.

(Here ended André's words :

*But One, that writeth, saith—
 Betwixt his stricken chords
 He heard the wheels of Death ;
 And knew the fruits Love bare
 But Dead-Sea apples were.)*

THE art of writing verses of artificial life, commonly called *société*, though constantly cultivated, has fewer masterpieces perhaps any other. For every one good example of this class in our language there are at least fifty good poems. In the present day of countless magazines there is a great dearth of this species of verse, but the number of those who have achieved success in it might be counted on the fingers, and the really first-rate pieces which have been produced are scarcely many for a man with a good memory to learn by heart.

There are many reasons for this. In the first place, the art is so easy to write badly and so difficult to write well, and it is so much more pleasant to throw off the new than to polish the old, that these trifles ever receive that finish from the hands of their authors which can alone raise them above mediocrity. To create is a matter of hours: to polish, of days; and few minds which are playful and impatient to write light verses have the patience necessary for thorough execution. Indeed, the labour required to carry these verses across the bridge which divides ability from achievement seems to be proportioned to the lightness of the load and the seriousness of the result. It may almost be truly said that this labour is in inverse proportion to the weight of the burden. To characterize by metaphor, these verses must be as finely wrought as filigree, and as polished as a cameo, before they can claim recognition as works of art. No miniature painter touches and retouches, paints and repolishes and repolishes, with more fastidiousness than the true artist in *vers de société*. It is an art in which sketches are worthless and only finished specimens capable of giving satisfaction.

But, besides the labour which is thus absolutely essential to the continued production of good work of this kind (for this art, like all others, has its occasional exceptions, especially in practice), and many perfect verses have been written with ease and without need of after-polish, it is rare to find combined in one person many different qualities necessary to produce any variety of delicate works. To do this, a man cannot have too wide sympathy, too varied knowledge or accomplishments; but at least, if he is to attain the first rank, he should have all or most of the following qualities, viz.: fancy, wit, humour, irony, satire, sentiment, and so on. Nor is it enough to possess varied powers, but he must have

under control, so that none may predominate too much ; and he must, to cap them all, have a critical taste, so as to ensure the agreeableness of his compositions, which in this must be like a salad, composed of all things and strongly savouring of none. For the end of the art is to amuse by elegance, to which harmony and proportion are essential.

There is still one more thing wanting to complete these works of art, and that is, manipulative skill. To borrow another simile from the art of cookery, a *pâté* may be filled with the choicest delicacies admirably mixed ; but, if the crust be heavy, the dish is spoiled ; in a word, without lightness of hand *vers de société* are worthless, despite all the care and science in their composition. Though we lament the necessity of using a French title, we cannot complain of its inappropriateness, for not only is the subject of these verses, Society, i.e., the artificial life of man as opposed to his natural life,—but it is only the influences of society upon a man that can educate him to produce them. Not alone with his heart and his God, but abroad in the world with his fellow-men, are these verses composed. If he write to his mistress it is not as the soul speaking to the soul, but the gentleman to the lady ; if he speak of himself it is not of the sorrow that has maimed his life, or the sin which saddens its solitary moments, but of disappointments he can jest with, or foibles which he does not mind twitting himself with publicly ; or, if he touch more serious subjects, it is only for a moment as a foil to brighter themes. In fact he sings as he would not mind talking in a mixed company, just showing sufficient feeling to escape the charge of heartlessness, and not enough to give a serious tone to the conversation, and whether smiling or sighing ever preserving a harmonious decorum between laughter on the one side and tears on the other, between deep feeling and impassiveness, never dull or heavy, never reckless or absurd, never quite in earnest but never without object in his freest banter.

It is not, however, only in the subject of the verse that this nice balance requires to be kept ; moderation in all things is necessary in this class of composition. The neatness of the thought, the aptness of the subject, the power of expression, the brightness of the wit, the sprightliness of the fancy, are all secondary considerations to the manner in which they are used. This fact should encourage those to whom the array of qualities which we have asserted as necessary to make a first-rate writer of these verses may appear formidable. It is not necessary that any of these qualities should be possessed in a remarkable degree ; it is only necessary that they should be thoroughly under control. So that a man with but slender wit, mediocre fancy, and slight satirical power may write very good *vers de société*, if he only have the skill to use them in proper proportion and in subordination to elegance. Indeed, it is almost an advantage that he should not have any gift very strongly

developed, as it is then apt to escape control and upset the balance.

He cannot, however, have too much culture, or be too well bred. A poet is said to be born not made; but a writer of *vers de société* must be both, and may be more properly said to be bred than either. Mr. Frederick Locker, himself a master of this kind of verse, writes in his charming preface to his charming "*Lyra Elegantiarum*," "The writer of *vers de société*, in order to be genuinely successful, must not only be more or less of a poet, but he must also be a man of the world, in the most liberal sense of the expression; he must have mixed throughout his life with the most refined and cultivated members of his species, not merely as a bystander but as an actor in the busy throng."

To this lovely nosegay of the garden-flowers of our literature, we must refer our readers for examples of writers no longer living. This book is as valuable from a historical as it is from an artistic point of view, and shows that if you could write a history of a country from its ballads you could write one of its society from its elegant verses. As you turn over the leaves of "*Lyra Elegantiarum*" you seem to see pass before you a panorama of different phases of English life, from the time of Queen Elizabeth to Queen Victoria. Society changes and its verses with them. We no longer pen sonnets to our mistress's eyebrow or woo Amaryllis in the guise of a shepherd; the golden numbers of Herrick we could scarce imitate if we would; we dare not be so nasty as Swift, or so naughty as Congreve. The days of sham Arcadianism are over, and we have little sympathy with the sentimentality of fifty years ago. The practical and decorous spirit of the present age is apparent even in our lightest verses. Let us consider a few of the more recent.

Of these, however, we must limit our notice to such as will best illustrate our theory of the art, and show its latest development. Our readers will find our deficiencies in this and other respects amply supplied in an article by Mr. Tom Hood in *London Society* for May, 1870, the writer of which is not only the author of many pleasant verses, and a careful critic, but has published a little work on the "Rules of Rhyme," which teaches the art of versification in a clear and sound manner.

Some mention of Præd, the father of modern English verse, is, however, necessary. He stands first not only in priority and quality, but in quantity also. In such pieces as "The Belle of the Ballroom" and "The Vicar" he first showed how varied were the sympathies, the learning, and the taste, which could be displayed with advantage in *vers de société*. He extended their domain from high-flown compliment, fanciful conceits, flirtations, and bacchanalism, to every other subject that interests men, and forms the matter of conversation. Politics, philosophy, literature, art, domestic life, and even religion,

are drawn into his wide net. He is like his own Belle ; who talked—

“ — of politics and prayers ;
Of Southey's prose and Wordsworth's sonnets,—
Of dangles—or of dancing bears,
Of battles—or the last new bonnets.”

The domain so extended has never contracted and never can contract again.

Though not equal to Præd in originality or natural facility, Mr. Locker has attained to the first rank of writers of *vers de société* by acquiring a perfect knowledge of his own powers and almost perfect skill in using them. Although his verses are thoroughly representative of his day, and marked with distinct individuality, there is scarcely a versifier from Shakespeare to Thackeray from whom he has not learnt something of his art. He therefore writes with perfect “knowledge,” as that word is used in connection with musical compositions, and he has attempted almost every variety of verse of this kind with a high degree of success. “The Pilgrims of Pall Mall” is not unworthy to be placed beside Lamb's “Hester ;” of the tender pathos of “A Wish” Cowper need not have been ashamed ; the jesting philosophy of “A Human Skull” might have occurred to Præd ; while of verses that end with an anti-climax, “Geraldine and I” is a masterpiece, though it is doubtful, whether a person with such trained power of description as “I” could have proved a bore to a lady so witty as Geraldine. But though essentially a writer of verse as distinct from poetry, he is not wanting in music of a higher strain, such as pleased the ears of ladies in the time of Elizabeth ; as the exquisite Serenade recently published in *Good Words* sufficiently exemplifies. We prefer, however, to quote here, as being more representative of his individuality, and of the special qualities of the kind of verse which we are discussing, the following piece :—

THE ANGORA CAT.

Good pastry is vended
In Cité Fadette ;
Madame Pons can make splendid
Brioche and galette !

Monsieur Pons is so fat that
He's laid on the shelf ;
Madame Pons had a cat that
Was fat as herself.

Long hair, soft as satin,
A musical purr—
'Gainst the window she'd flatten
Her delicate fur.

Once I drove Lou to see what
 Our neighbours were at,
 When, in rapture, cried she, "What
 An exquisite cat !

"What whickers ! She's purring
 All over. Regale
 Our eyes, Puss, by stirring
 Your feathery tail !

"Monsieur Pons, will you sell her ?"
 "*Ma femme est sortie,*
 Your offer I'll tell her,
 But—will she ?" says he.

Yet Pons was persuaded
 To part with the prize :
 (Our bargain was aided,
 My Lou, by your eyes !)

From his *légitime* save him,
 My fate I prefer !
 For I warrant she gave him
Un mauvais quart d'heure.

I'm giving a pleasant
 Grimalkin to Lou,—
 Ah, Puss, what a present
 I'm giving to you !

What a trifle it is. The poet buys for a young lady a cat from a French baker who is afraid of his wife. That is all. Yet how it pleases ! How delicately the scene and bargain are suggested rather than described ; with how pretty a compliment it ends. Had the description been minuter or the dialogue more full, had even the compliment been more elaborate, the work had been spoilt. As it is, it is perfect, as light and sweet as one of Mons. Pons' *brioches*.

Of the workmanship of Mr. Mortimer Collins, to whom Nature has been more prodigal of gift, we cannot speak in the same terms of satisfaction. To Mr. Locker we can point as an example in this respect, but to Mr. Collins mainly as a warning. No poet has written more splendid stanzas than Mr. Collins, and none fewer good poems. With unbounded command of language and power of versification, he can write numberless lines which, for sweetness and strength, are unsurpassable. The willing ear listens, charmed as with the voice of a siren (a male siren, be it said, with a rich baritone), and the charm lasts so long as we do not pay too much heed to the words ; but when we pass from the sound to the sense, disappointment awaits us ere long. After a succession of faultless stanzas, some "foreign matter," some phrase out of keeping, or expression of questionable taste maybe, interrupts the harmony and breaks the spell. For

instance, in the "Inn of Strange Meetings," a description of a bridegroom watching his sleeping bride, conceived in a pure and elevated spirit, is spoilt by apostrophising her as his "lady of the loosened zone," and by the entirely unnecessary information that the coverlet of the pair is made of "miniver." Again the romantic spirit of "Rupert's Ring" is ruined by the commonplace expression "darling thing," applied in the concluding stanza to the lady whose love at last rewards a life of loveless toil.

This want of keeping makes it difficult to assign a place to many of his compositions, in which the poet seems uncertain of his aim and attitude, whether he is on Parnassus or Primrose Hill, drinking Hippocrene or claret, or whether the pipe at his lips was made by Pan in Attica or Milo in the Strand. There can, however, be no doubt that the two little Horatian pieces, "Ad Chloen, M.A." and its companion, are properly described as *vers de société*.

AD CHLOEN, M.A.

(Fresh from her Cambridge Examination.)

Lady, very fair are you,
And your eyes are very blue,
 And your nose;
And your brow is like the snow;
And the various things you know
 Goodness knows.

You have pouting piquant lips,
You can doubtless an eclipse
 Calculate;
But for your cerulean hue,
I had certainly from you
 Met my fate.

And the rose flush on your cheek,
And your algebra and Greek
 Perfect are;
And that loving lustrous eye
Recognises in the sky
 Every star.

If by an arrangement dual
I were Adams mixed with Whewell,
 Then some day
I, as wooer, perhaps might come,
To so sweet an Artium
 . Magistra.

But for the last word this little piece would have been perfect, and we cannot understand how Mr. Collins, with his ear for rhythm and power of versification, could have allowed it to pass from his hand with such a serious defect. Surely to accentuate the first and third syllable of "Magistra," is as complicated a mistake in quantity as it is possible to make, while, on the other hand, if the word is pronounced properly, the rhythm and rhyme are both spoiled. The companion to this piece, which is equally admirable in conception, is also spoiled by similar carelessness in execution, and also by a very old joke quite unworthy of Chloe, M.A. We are sorry that we have not time to dwell more on the merits of this exceedingly clever writer, who, by such poems as the "Ivory Gate," "A Greek Idyll," "A Summer Song," and others, has shown that he has power to produce work without flaw.

Having contrasted two writers to show the rigid requirements of this art in point of execution and tone, we now wish to contrast

others to show its primary aim. The intention of *vers de société* is, as we conceive it, to please by means of elegance ; and, however elegant they may be, they are not properly so called if the primary intention is to please by other means.

No future collector of non-serious verse will be able to pass over the works of Mr. C. S. Calverley or Mr. W. S. Gilbert. The first is a master of parody, the latter of grotesque. The humour of Mr. Calverley is indeed of the driest possible kind. It is as impossible to laugh at it as it is impossible not to smile. The most severe correctness both in structure and rhythm is everywhere maintained. They are polished as scarcely any English verses are polished, and as elegant in treatment as they can well be. In a word, they in every way conform to the strictest rules of our art in point of composition, but, nevertheless, their primary aim is to amuse by the elaboration of a peculiar species of humour, viz., burlesque, and they are, therefore, outside our present province. We cannot, however, forbear quoting one of these exquisite trifles, or help regretting that it must be one of the shortest.

PEACE.

A STUDY.

He stood, a worn-out City clerk—
Who'd toiled, and seen no holiday,
For forty years from dawn to dark—
Alone beside Caermarthen Bay.
He felt the salt spray on his lips ;
Heard children's voices on the sands ;
Up the sun's path he saw the ships
Sail on and on to other lands ;
And laughed aloud. Each sight and sound
To him was joy too deep for tears ;
He sat him on the beach, and bound
A blue bandana round his ears ;
And thought how, posted near his door,
His own green door on Camden Hill,
Two hands at least, most likely more,
Were mingling at their own sweet will
Verdi with Vance. And at the thought
He laughed again, and softly drew
That "Morning Herald" that he'd bought
Forth from his breast, and read it through.

For a similar reason the author of the "Bab Ballads" must only here be mentioned as a master of versification, who, while possessing all the technical skill required for our art, has written few if any pieces strictly within its limits.

On the other hand, elegance is the genius who presides over the work of Mr. Austin Dobson, the last candidate for notice both as a poet and a writer of *vers de société*. In writing of his verses we feel

the same delicacy as though they were our own, for not only have many of the pieces now collected in "Vignettes in Rhyme" appeared in these pages, but the writer of this article is his intimate friend, and has been privileged to watch the development of his poetical power from its dawn to the present day. With this avowal we do not mind expressing our opinion in this place, as here, if anywhere, what we write will be read by those who have already become acquainted with his style and capacity, and will be therefore competent to judge from their own experience how much our opinion is biassed by familiarity and friendship. We think then that no one has excelled him in the technical skill of his art, and that he has treated subjects of modern life with a spirit and grace that is peculiarly his own. The comparison drawn by Mr. Looker between *vers de société* and old china is especially applicable to his verses, which have all the qualities of the best Dresden and Chelsea, without their affectation and insincerity. He has especially sympathy with all that is beautiful in the Arcadian French School of Watteau and Boucher, but applies all its grace of decoration to genuine sentiment and healthy morality. He is to the poetry of the present day what Mr. G. D. Leslie is to pictorial art, but he is something more. When we have eliminated from his little volume such poems as the "Dead Letter," the "Gentleman," and "Gentlewoman of the Old School," "Une Marquise," &c., which belong to this pictorial school, the four beautiful songs of Angiola, in which he has caught the spirit of the early Italian poets, and his imitations of Horace, there remain many which show that his sympathy is not limited to the grace and fancy of former epochs, but that he has delicate springs of wit and humour, a thorough appreciation of the spirit of modern culture and society, and a pictorial power of his own. Of this power a good example is given in the following lines, in which, with a few delicate touches, the dreariness of a London doctor's room and garden is admirably depicted.

"Well, I must wait!" The Doctor's room,
 Where I used this expression,
 Wore the severe official gloom
 Attached to that profession;
 Randered severer by a bald
 And skinless Gladiator,
 Whose raw robustness first appalled
 The entering spectator.

No one would call "The Lancet" gay,—
 Few could avoid confessing
 That Jones "On Muscular Decay"
 Is, as a rule, depressing:
 So leaving both, to change the scene,
 I turned toward the shutter,
 And peered out vacantly between
 A water-butt and gutter. 4

Below, the Doctor's garden lay,
 If thus imagination
 May dignify a square of clay
 Unused to vegetation,
 Filled with a dismal-looking swing—
 That brought to mind a gallows—
 An empty kennel, mouldering,
 And two dyspeptic aloes.

No sparrow chirped, no daisy sprung,
 About the place deserted ;
 Only across the swing-board hung
 A battered doll, inverted,
 Which sadly seemed to disconcert
 The vagrant cat that scanned it,
 Sniffed doubtfully around the skirt,
 But failed to understand it.

Of the rare quality of irony, "The Love Letter," and "A Virtuoso," are good examples, and it would be difficult to exceed the refined repartee of such pieces as the "Dialogue from Plato," and "Tu Quoque."

As the latter poem has been much improved since it appeared in these pages, we will reprint it here, as an example of his most finished work, and his unwearying patience in finishing.

TU QUOQUE.

AN IDYLL IN THE CONSERVATORY.

—"romprons-nous,

Ou ne romprons-nous pas ?"—LE DÉPIT AMOUREUX.

NELLIE.

If I were you, when ladies at the play, sir,
 Beckon and nod, a melodrama through,
 I would not turn abstractedly away, sir,
 If I were you !

FRANK.

If I were you, when persons I affected,
 Wait for three hours to take me down to Kew,
 I would, at least, pretend I recollected,
 If I were you !

NELLIE.

If I were you, when ladies are so lavish,
 Sir, as to keep me every waltz but two,
 I would not dance with *odious* Miss M'Tavish,
 If I were you !

FRANK.

If I were you, who vow you cannot suffer
 Whiff of the best,—the mildest "honey-dew,"
 I would not dance with smoke-consuming Puffer,
 If I were you !

NELLIE.

If I were you, I would not, sir, be bitter,
Even to write the "Cynical Review ;"—

FRANK.

No, I should doubtless find flirtation fitter,
' If I were you !

NELLIE.

Really ! You would ? Why Frank, you're quite delightful,—
Hot as Othello, and as black of hue ;
Borrow my fan. I would not look so *frightful*
If I were you !

FRANK.

"It is the cause !" I mean your chaperon is
Bringing some well-curled juvenile. Adieu !
I shall retire. I'd spare that poor Adonis,
If I were you !

NELLIE.

Go, if you will. At once ! And by express, sir !
Where shall it be ? To China—or Peru ?
Go, I should leave inquirers my address, sir,
If I were you !

FRANK.

No,—I remain. To stay and fight a duel
Seems, on the whole, the proper thing to do—
Ah, you are strong,—I would not then be cruel,
If I were you !

NELLIE.

One does not like one's feelings to be doubted,—

FRANK.

One does not like one's friends to misconstrue,—

NELLIE.

If I confess that I a wee bit pouted ?—

FRANK.

I should admit that I was *piqué*, too.

NELLIE.

Ask me to dance. I'd say no more about it,
If I were you !

[Waltz.—*Exeunt.*]

At present Mr. Dobson's work bears more trace of the artist than the man, of education than nature, of sensibility than feeling, but it possesses in a remarkable degree the special qualities which are required in *vers de société* and poems of fancy, such as he has hitherto

attempted, while the genuine pathos of "Before Sedan," which touches a far higher chord, and the force shown in occasional verses and stanzas, wherever force is required incidentally for the sake of art, prove the possession of varied powers, which are as yet undeveloped or which he has not as yet chosen to display.

In concluding our article we would say a few words as to the uses of *vers de société*. We think we hear our practical friends exclaiming, after out of mere friendship they have waded through this essay: "What waste of time and talent! what trifling! Why your verses are neither prose nor poetry, and are fit only to light fires." It were useless to answer such; the man who cries *cui bono* to this or any other kind of art has no need for it; it is as useless to him as a telescope to a blind man. But there are many who take pleasure in them, and even write them, who doubt whether the delight which is given by them is worthy of so much pains. To these we would say that all relaxation has its use, whether physical or intellectual, and no greater relaxation can be given to the intellect of a cultivated man than reading and writing *vers de société*. It is for these and by these that they are written; as the athlete indulges in graceful exercise for the relaxation of his body, so the best relaxation for an industrious mind is a milder and more pleasurable use of the intellect. If at the same time a man can increase his knowledge of what is graceful, and still further cultivate and refine his mind, so much the better, and this is just what *vers de société* enable him to do. But the uses of this art do not stop at relaxation; it is valuable also both for exercise and education. There is no better means of keeping the mind elastic and ready for action than its cultivation, which requires quickness of apprehension, lightness of touch, and steadiness of hand and head. Nor are its services to literature and language to be lightly regarded, especially in respect to the art of versification and the use of words. To young poets its discipline is valuable, as allowing no laxity of rhyme or rhythm, or any license, poetical or other; both to them and writers of prose, as demanding the expression of what is meant in the fewest and best words. Neither can we consider contemptible, from a moral point of view, an art which requires such a thorough subjection of self and its powers to the dictates of decency and human-kindliness. To use satire without spite, humour without coarseness, wit without either license or profanity, to curb fancy by truth, and speculation by sense, are a few of the moral lessons which are taught with severity in the modern school of *vers de société*.

W. COSMO MONKHOUSE.

MR. MILL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND MR. FITZJAMES STEPHEN ON "LIBERTY."

IF a writer of autobiography reveals more about himself than he intends (and he must be far too self-conscious if he does not), the critics of an autobiography also uncover themselves in ways which they little dream of. True, when this shuttlecock sort of comment has gone its round and exhausted itself, the outcome is simply that we are all imperfect creatures, and that onlookers may see things that players miss, in the heat of the game,—true ; but, after all, an autobiographical book of so pronounced a character as Mr. Mill's volume, dealing so much, too, with questions that divide schools and parties, does seem to serve as an unusually active and serviceable kind of litmus paper. In some literary quarters, and I have no doubt whatever in the large majority of minds, there is a total disregard of the avowed purposes of the author, and of the essential character of his work ; the result being, of course, an unfair estimate. In one instance, we find, I think, a little haste on the side of a partisan. In that able and courageous paper the *Examiner*, a lady correspondent takes the *Saturday Review* of 1st November to task for "ungenerous depreciation," and for hinting that Mrs. Mill "never wrote anything." The writer then refers to the famous article by Mrs. Mill, published first in the *Westminster* and then in the *Dissertations* as a proof of the *Saturday Reviewer's* ignorance. But (though I am going fully to accept Mr. Mill's estimate of his wife), unless my memory fails me, Mr. Mill has spoken of that essay in such terms as to suggest [to all but amateurs, that his share of the work as "amanuensis" (I think he uses that word) scarcely stopped at what the word exactly implies. But whether my recollection is right or wrong, I must candidly say that this article in the *Saturday Review* impressed me rather favourably. It is easy to read between the lines and find indirect "depreciation" there ; but the writer of the article was evidently putting considerable restraint upon himself all the way through, and the general result seems to me a tolerably fair one,—not adequate ; that is another matter,—and not free from error by any means. The chief point that struck me disagreeably was the (surely ?) pedantic remark that Mr. Mill's knowledge of Greek was never that of the perfect scholar. This was certainly going rather far a-field to say something nasty. Mr. Mill is under the mould, and of what moment is his Greek scholarship, even considered with reference to his father's plan of education ? Besides, considering the immense range of Mr. Mill's

faculties and that omnivorous apprehensiveness which belongs to every such mind, a man's right to criticise his scholarship ought to be very clear indeed. This question of scholarship in general is indeed one upon which much pedantry is always ready to come to the front. A man of the quality of Mr. Mill, or even of far lower quality, may not carry about him much of the small change of scholarship, Greek or other, and thus he may at a moment's notice be made to look small by a fellow of the quality, say, of Dr. Parr; when all the while, if the two men were fairly pitted against each other on the special point, the *general* mastery of the bigger of the two would, even on that point, blow the other out of the water in five minutes. The blunder is, as if it were said of a great statesman that he never attained the rank of a perfect administrator, because he didn't know, off-hand, what was paid for the last door-mat purchased in Downing Street.

To quote myself (on some former occasion) it is hard to determine, when silence has once been wrongly broken on a subject, whether the remedy is to be more speech or a return to silence. But, surely, it was indiscreet in another critic to refer to Mr. Mill's silence about his mother. He must have had his reasons—and who knows what they were? Or rather let me put it,—who has a *right* to know what they were? I might have guessed, and I, in fact, did guess as I read, that James Mill was a man who resolutely sat down upon everybody else in the household. Now James Mill has been well before the world for scores of years, and his son has frankly put him in front more than once; but, as all our guessing might be wrong, had we not better leave the matter alone? If anybody knows, privately, facts about the Mill household, it in no way alters the case: for he has not therefore any right to make a public use of his knowledge—a point too often forgotten by reviewers and other publicists when they allow their behind-scenes knowledge or suspicion to colour their foot-light comments upon others or their books.

One of the most obviously true—and fertile—of the criticisms is that the autobiography discloses an *unexpectedly* “plentiful lack” of humour on Mr. Mill's part. I have faint suspicions that even here he may have a little misrepresented himself. At any rate, plenty of men of the same rank have wanted humour. Shelley said the reform of the world would never get on till laughter was put down, and most reformers have, to use Milton's phrase, wrapped their talent of sport in a napkin, if they have had such a talent. Unfortunately, the criticism in this case goes much deeper than the (Goldsmith) inability to swallow the kitchen poker—it points to false, or at least partial, estimates of many of the great facts of life. Mr. John Mill's grave condemnation of Mr. James Mill's un-Malthusian conduct certainly overthrew all my seriousness: “più non vi leggemmo avanti.” To see a philosopher pitching into his own father for begetting him

brothers and sisters, put me in mind of Sir Walter Scott's reply—unquoteable, but gloriously human and worthy of Sterne at his best—to the publisher who wanted him to do an expurgated Dryden. I fairly roared, and laid down the book. It is difficult to give any plain reason why Mr. Mill, thinking as he did, should not write thus and thus ; but it shows that there was a screw loose in his experience of life or his culture. These are very curious matters. We turn with blank amazement from Godwin when he publishes Mary Wollstonecraft's letters to her former lover ; but Godwin is all the while as simple-hearted over it as a baby—he only wonders at *our* wonder, if, indeed, he goes so far as to observe it. We can't be all alike ; we must bear and forbear.

Not less irrelevant than the remarks upon the absence of all mention by Mr. Mill of his mother, are those which refer to his almost total silence about his brothers and sisters. For why should he mention them ? The " Autobiography " is avowedly a propagandist book, a history of opinion and personal culture ; and family matters are outside of its scope, to say nothing of the positive good reasons there might be for saying nothing about them. If I were to write an autobiographical book, I should think it very hard—and very ridiculous—in a total stranger to take upon himself to express surprise at my leaving out my first cousin, my uncle, my aunt, or any one else whom I chose, for my own reasons, to omit. The question for the outsider must be—Is this book truth-like, and does it fulfil its *own* intention ? If any book in the world is entitled to assume this condition, it is an autobiography.

In order to vary the page, let us break the connection a very little, and take up one or two other matters in which certain reviewers are clearly in the wrong. In the *Saturday* we find this :—

" About the age of thirty-five, as he records with perfect confidence in the soundness of his judgment, Mr. Mill withdrew from the limited intercourse with society which he had previously cultivated. No more erroneous proposition has ever been enunciated than the assertion that ' a person of high intellect should never go into unintellectual society unless he can enter it as an apostle.' Again, ' If the character is formed and the mind made up on the few cardinal points of human opinion, agreement of conviction and feeling on these has been felt in all times to be an essential requisite of anything worthy of the name of friendship in a really earnest mind.' A man who will neither enter unintellectual society nor consort with any one who differs from him in opinion, practises an unconscious self-indulgence analogous to the care of a valetudinarian for freedom from disturbance and for an equable temperature. In precisely the same spirit, religious bigots and other leaders of cliques and coteries confine themselves to the society of those who echo or share their opinions. From the date of his voluntary seclusion Mr. Mill lived in

the closest union with a companion who, among other qualities, agreed in all his opinions so completely that he supposed himself to be guided by her judgment. To be never doubted and never contradicted is for the wisest of men more pleasant than wholesome."

Now, first about the voluntary self-seclusion of the class of persons whom Mr. Mill rather inadequately and unfortunately classifies as "intellectual." If we read this term as referring to those who *understand* or who have *vision*, it is not so bad; for those who have vision will have high and pure aims. The description is awkward—as the event proves. But, read the passage fairly, and you at once perceive that it is no more than has been laid down as law for the prophet or idealistic reformer time out of mind. You may find it in the Bible, in Plato, in Schiller, in Carlyle, in Emerson, in Goethe, in Milton, in probably every "prophetic" writer that ever lived. Where two or three are gathered together, says Shelley, there is the devil in the midst of them. What is the excuse which Renan makes for his Jesus? That it is impossible to mix with the multitude and not lower the pitch of one's own faith and self-respect. In all ages and all climes, poets, artists, and philosophers have been compelled to "wall in the sacred fire;" some of them over larger tracts of their lives, some over smaller. Some of them have withdrawn for a time even from their own wives, and their wives have loved them none the less. As for Mr. Mill, he had seen plenty of society in his time. True, it had been too much of one kind, but it does not appear that he was to blame for that—his first duty was to his own soul, and most loyally he fulfilled that duty. He had a *sufficient* number of intimates and acquaintances all through life; a wife whom he adored; and *plenty of work to do, which work he did*. It seems rather hard to preach sermons now, for his daughter-in-law to read, about his studious and self-respecting mode of life.

If, however, anybody wants to see the doctrine that friendship in the strong sense can only exist between those who are agreed in "cardinal points," he cannot do better than turn to Mr. Fitzjames Stephen's chapter on "Fraternity." There, especially at pages 257 and 284, he will find the proposition which the *Saturday* disputes, put as strongly—I was going to say, as harshly—as human pen could well put it.

What the *Saturday* has to say of Mr. Mill's wife and her always agreeing with him, is worse than all. No man of brains ever loved a woman of brains (and nobody has suggested that Mrs. Mill was not at least a woman of high and bright intelligence) because she agreed with him. And in the present case we find Mr. Mill telling us over and over again that his wife disagreed with him so far as to be in some most vital particulars his teacher as well as his friend. The differences of opinion between them were at first considerable, and to the last the wife exercised the functions of a critic towards all that

the husband wrote. As for general knowledge of the world and aptitude to uncover social secrets, no writer has more strongly than Mr. Mill confirmed me in the long-standing opinion that men of the world are apt to think a great deal too much of what they gain (as well as too little of what they lose) by the terms on which they carry on their lives. It is not by loafing about and using the eyes like gimlets to pierce through nine-inch bricks that you will get to know most even of "the world." It is by practising such an amount of reserve as shall keep the mirror of the mind unsullied that you get to know things.

There is something wrong with every man of faculty who has not learnt or got near to learning this important practical truth.

No doubt a "man of the world," in the usual sense, would be quicker to extricate himself from, say, a street-row, or to gain an argumentative victory in the smoking-room, where the conditions of the discussion were (as they always are in mixed society) absolutely false; but even here Mr. Mill had a surprise for us. Nothing ever startled me more than the manner in which his speeches and answers to questions "brought down the house" at public meetings when he was first a candidate for Westminster. There was, of course, no clap-trap about them,—they were, indeed, curt and bare; and yet they told upon mixed audiences of very imperfect intelligence.

After all, too, is there any proof that Mr. Mill's withdrawal from general society was anything like what it should have been in order to justify the sort of comment that has been made upon it? All the facts at my command point the other way. That he did not in the least allow mere difference of opinion to forbid or abate friendship (intelligence and fine character being presupposed) is abundantly proved. If I had leisure to mould or put in order all the material my own bare memory could collect on these matters from my scanty reading, I could make out an overwhelming case; and, even if the reader will only follow me in a chance quotation or two, he will see how wide of the mark are these criticisms of the *Saturday*. First, let us take what Mr. Mill himself says of his friendship with Sterling:—

"With Sterling I soon became very intimate, and was more attached to him than I have ever been to any other man. He was, indeed, one of the most loveable of men. His frank, cordial, affectionate, and expansive character; a love of truth alike conspicuous in the highest things and the humblest; a generous and ardent nature which threw itself with impetuosity into the opinions it adopted, but was as eager to do justice to the doctrines and the men it was opposed to as to make war on what it thought their errors; and an equal devotion to the two cardinal points of Liberty and Duty, formed a combination of qualities as attractive to me as to all others who knew him as well as I did. With his open mind

or manufactured man, having had a certain impress of opinion stamped on me which I could only reproduce ; and what a change took place in his feelings when he found, in the discussion on Wordsworth and Byron, that Wordsworth, and all which that name implies, belonged to me as much as to him and his friends. The failure of his health soon scattered all his plans of life, and compelled him to live at a distance from London, so that, after the first year or two of our acquaintance, we only saw each other at distant intervals. But (as he said himself in one of his letters to Carlyle) when we did meet it was like brothers."

This, by itself, speaks volumes, but there is plenty more. Many will have been glad to note the friendly way in which Mr. Mill speaks of Mr. William Maccall. In the latter gentleman's deeply interesting magazine, *The People* (No. 27, July 3, 1852), is the following note prefixed to one of a series of letters from Sterling to Maccall :—

"Early in March, 1842, I was in London for a week or two. Sterling gave me notes for Mr. Thomas Carlyle and Mr. John Stuart Mill. That to Mr. Mill I presented, and have since had *much pleasant and profitable commune* with one of the clearest of thinkers and most lucid of writers."

Now, what was Mr. Maccall? (he can scarcely be changed *now*.) A red-hot, shaggy, rampagious mystic,—the most red-hot speaker and writer that ever came under my notice. My worst enemy has never accused me of wanting fire, but I used to feel it almost a sultry thing to hear Maccall lecture on a hot Sunday morning. Take two sentences (Mr. Maccall's sentences are often as long as the Anaconda snake, and he rarely condescends to make a fresh paragraph at all) from a lecture on the "Unity of the Individual":—

"It would be ridiculous and no less presumptuous to measure and to estimate the works of God, especially the noblest work of all—Man,—by the hard, dry, mechanical utilitarianism, which by the side of Mammon and conventionalism is quickly ascending into one of the most revolting despotisms of the day I protest in the name of Nature, in the name of Him who is the light and the life of Nature, and whose everlasting laws and benignant providence cannot be mocked and nullified by the pedantries of Sciolists ; I protest against this mean and huckstering mode of judging the capacities and satisfying the requirements of Humanity."

Does it look, from this, as if Mr. Maccall was the sort of man to have "much pleasant and profitable commune" with Mr. Mill? Yet we learn from himself that he had, and Mr. Mill's words tend to confirm it.

Take again the testimony of Mr. W. T. Thornton, an Anti-Utilitarian

in moral science, and the political economist who corrected the wage-fund theory. In the *Examiner* of May 17, we have this :—

“ It is little to say that my own friendship with him was, from first to last, never once ruffled by difference or misunderstanding of any kind. Differences of opinion we had in abundance, but my open avowal of them was always recognised by him as one of the strongest proofs of respect, and served to cement instead of weakening our attachment. The nearest approach made, throughout our intercourse, to anything of an unpleasant character was about the time of his retirement from the India House. Talking over that one day with two or three of my colleagues, I said it would not do to let Mill go without receiving some permanently visible token of our regard. The motion was no sooner made than it was carried by acclamation. Every member of the *Examiner's* Office—for we jealously insisted on confining the affair to ourselves—came tendering his subscription, scarcely waiting to be asked ; in half-an-hour's time some 50*l.* or 60*l.*—I forget the exact sum—was collected—which in due course was invested in a superb silver inkstand, designed by our friend Digby Wyatt, and manufactured by Messrs. Elkington. Before it was ready, however, an unexpected trouble arose. In some way or other, Mill had got wind of our proceeding, and, coming to me in consequence, began almost to upbraid me as its originator. I had never before seen him so angry. He hated all such demonstrations, he said, and was quite resolved not to be made the subject of them. He was sure they were not altogether genuine or spontaneous. There were always several persons who took part in them, merely because they did not like to refuse—and, in short, whatever we might do, he would have none of it. In vain I represented how eagerly everybody, without exception, had come forward ; that we had now gone too far to recede ; that if he would not take the inkstand we should be utterly at a loss what to do with it, and that I myself should be in a specially embarrassing position. Mill was not to be moved. This was a question of principle, and on principle he could not give way. There was nothing left therefore, but resort to a species of force. I arranged with Messrs. Elkington that our little testimonial should be taken down to Mr. Mill's house at Blackheath by one of their men, who, after leaving it with the servant, should hurry away without waiting for an answer. This plan succeeded, but I have always suspected, though she never told me so, that its success was mainly due to Miss Helen Taylor's good offices. But for her, the inkstand would almost certainly have been returned,* instead of being promoted, as it eventually was, to a place of honour in her own and her father's drawing-room.”

The story of the inkstand is so characteristic of Mr. Mill,—so strongly illustrative of that love of spontaneity or truthfulness which

* No, Mr. Thornton, no ! Mr. Mill was, surely, a gentleman !

is the everlasting hobby of my own pen and which attracts me more than any other moral quality, that I should gladly retain it for my own sake, even if the reader would not, as he will, thank me for it. To Mr. Thornton's testimony is appended a note by Mr. Fox Bourne, which is as follows :—

"I may be permitted here, without Mr. Thornton's knowledge, to recall a remark made by Mr. Mill only a few weeks ago. We were speaking of Mr. Thornton's recently published '*Old-Fashioned Ethics and Common-Sense Metaphysics*,' when I remarked on Mr. Mill's wide divergence from most of the views contained in it. 'Yes,' he replied, 'it is pleasant to find *something* on which to differ from Thornton.' Mr. Mill's prompt recognition of the importance of Mr. Thornton's refutation of the wage-fund theory, is only one out of numberless instances of his peculiar magnanimity."

Following this comes a tribute by Mr. Herbert Spencer, tracing Mr. Mill's so-called errors of policy to 'an almost romantic generosity,' and adding the following personal record :—

"Some seven years ago, after bearing as long as was possible the continued losses entailed on me by the publication of the *System of Philosophy*, I notified to the subscribers that I should be obliged to cease at the close of the volume then in progress. Shortly after the issue of this announcement I received from Mr. Mill a letter, in which, after expressions of regret, and after naming a plan which he wished to prosecute for reimbursing me, he went on to say :—'In the next place . . . what I propose is, that you should write the next of your treatises, and that I should guarantee the publisher against loss, *i. e.* should engage, after such length of time as may be agreed on, to make good any deficiency that may occur, not exceeding a given sum, that sum being such as the publisher may think sufficient to secure him.' Now, though these arrangements were of kinds that I could not bring myself to yield to, they none the less profoundly impressed me with Mr. Mill's nobility of feeling, and his anxiety to further what he regarded as a beneficial end. Such proposals would have been remarkable, even had there been entire agreement of opinion. But they were the more remarkable as being made by him under the consciousness that there existed between us certain fundamental differences, openly avowed. I had, both directly and by implication, combated that form of the experiential theory of human knowledge which characterizes Mr. Mill's philosophy ; in upholding Realism, I had opposed in decided ways, those metaphysical systems to which his own Idealism was closely allied ; and we had long carried on a controversy respecting the test of truth, in which I had similarly attacked Mr. Mill's positions in an outspoken manner. That under such circumstances he should have volunteered his aid, and urged it upon me, as he did, on the ground that it would not imply any personal obligation, proved in him a very exceptional generosity."

"Quite recently I have seen afresh illustrated this fine trait—this ability to bear, with unruffled temper and without any diminution of kindly feeling, the publicly-expressed antagonism of a friend. The last evening I spent at his house was in the company of another invited guest, who, originally agreeing with him entirely on certain disputed questions, had some fortnight previously displayed his change of view—nay, had publicly criticised some of Mr. Mill's positions in a very undisguised manner. Evidently, along with his own unswerving allegiance to truth, there was in Mr. Mill an unusual power of appreciating in others a like conscientiousness; and so of suppressing any feeling of irritation produced by difference—suppressing it not in appearance only, but in reality; and that, too, under the most trying circumstances."

These things do not look as if Mr. Mill was impatient of difference of opinion, or apt to regulate his friendships by any sentiment of the kind. As to his intellectual magnanimity, let us just recall a fact which certainly was a great surprise to me. In his book on Sir William Hamilton, Mr. Mill showed that he had seriously misunderstood Mr. Spencer. I was much astonished at this; but while the matter was so to speak yet damp from the press, a printed slip was appended by Mr. Mill to his book, candidly confessing that he had in truth for the moment confounded the idea of primary truth with that of *intuitive* truth—adding, however, that he thought both conceptions open to the same destructive criticism from his own side (I quote from remote memory and very hasty reading). Now, mean persons may say that Mr. Mill could not have helped admitting this passing mistake—and that in terms; but this cuts both ways, for it implies that to make the confession must have cost something, even to a man who could so well afford to acknowledge an error; and it *was* acknowledged openly, decidedly, and promptly,—though there were many other ways of doing it.

Before we pass on, those who may fancy from a certain chilliness of tone, which is not rare with Mr. Spencer, that he is not a particularly good judge of what is "romantic generosity" and what is not,—should be reminded of the Mr. Spencer who sent one of the very earliest indignant guineas to the fund for Dr. Hessel. The name of the philosopher was at the top of the first column of published names in the *Daily News*.

But in truth, to return to Mr. Mill, it is a great mistake to impute aridity and want of feeling to a man because he is clear-headed and can stand to his guns for a hard-featured (not necessarily hard-hearted) principle of action. We have it under the hand and seal of no less emotional and lyrical a man than Robert Burns that he considered the pathetic old ballad of Burd Helen "silly, even to contemptibility." Perhaps the reader will at first wonder why I mention this here. But the reason is not very obscure or I hope

far-fetched. If Mr. Mill had made this criticism, would it not have been considered a proof of emotional and artistic ineptitude,—such as no one would impute to Burns, though he did make the criticism? Such things may well put us on our guard. Perhaps this little paper may happen to be read by a gentleman who some years ago remarked to me, at a dinner-party, that he thought Mr. Mill's occasional use of musical topics and illustrations affected and pedantic; the half-pretences of a man who was really deficient on the emotive and artistic side. Partly from my entire faith in Mr. Mill's truthfulness and directness, partly from what such musical and critical instinct as I happen to possess told me, I met my friend's opinion with a decided negative. Now what have we all learnt since Mr. Mill's death, and what do we gather from the Autobiography? His friends tell us that he could and did improvise well upon the piano, and he himself records that when yet a child he composed, to songs of Sir Walter Scott's, airs which he could recall in late maturity. We know, now, too, how Sterling at first thought Mill a manufactured man, and how he afterwards became convinced that Coleridge and Wordsworth "belonged" in the true sense to Mill as much as to him. It seems to me that (making necessary allowances) Sterling's second thoughts were the true ones, and his friendship with Mill proves it. There is, undoubtedly, a suspicion of aridity in Mr. Mill's way of expressing himself in regions purely or mainly emotive or æsthetic (especially when Religion and the Family are on the carpet); but that this was the super-induced part of him, and not the "grain" of his nature, is, I think, clear. Hence, Mr. Minto, a writer in the number of the *Examiner* (of 17th May), who appears to find something perfunctory, not quite whole-hearted, in Mr. Mill's more poetic studies, is, in my opinion, wrong. When we have allowed for the natural effects of the unhappy training he got from a father with whom the word "intense" was a by-word of scorn, we have remaining a large amount of poetic sensibility and emotional intensity which are evidently original and native to the man. Mr. James Mill went, in educating his eldest son, far beyond the limits of his rights as a father. It is clearly a father's duty not to teach his child what he does not believe himself, but it by no means follows that he is bound or even entitled to teach the child all he *does* believe himself, or to fix beforehand as far as possible the whole form of the child's character. In all education the path of the teacher is a narrow one, and it was scarcely possible for so self-confident and determined a man as James Mill not to err in the direction of doing too much. When we get into our hands what Mr. Mill has to say of Theism, and such matters, we shall be in a better position to judge of the amount of injury which,—whether one speaks now as Christian, Theist, Non-theist, or Manichee,—his character and sensibilities may be supposed to have received in youth. From curiously sugges-

tive passages scattered up and down his writings, I venture, even in the present stage of our knowledge of him, to select one which is really remarkable. It occurs in a footnote by Mr. Mill, on page 296 of vol. ii. of his edition of his father's "Analysis of the Human Mind." It is a portion of the work in which the hardness, bareness, self-sufficiency, inapprehensiveness, and rash decisiveness of James Mill's mind show themselves in such ludicrous colours that it is difficult to read on with patience. Here is one of Mr. John Mill's notes :—

"The elements contributed by association are certainly more, predominant in the pleasure of colours than in that of musical sounds ; yet *I am convinced that there is a direct element of physical pleasure in colours, anterior to association. My own memory recalls to me the intense and mysterious delight which in early childhood I had in the colours of certain flowers ; a delight far exceeding any I am now capable of receiving from colour of any description, with all its acquired associations. And this was the case at far too early an age, and with habits of observation far too little developed, to make any of the subtler combinations of form and proportion a source of much pleasure to me.* This last pleasure was acquired very gradually, and did not, until after the commencement of manhood, attain any considerable height. The examples quoted from Alison do not prove" [no, I should think not] "that there is no original beauty in colours, but only that the feeling of it is capable, as no one doubts that it is capable, of being over-powered by extraneous associations. Whether there is any similar organic basis of the pleasure derived from form, so far at least as this depends on proportion, I would not undertake to decide." [I will undertake ;—there is.] "The susceptibility to the physical pleasures produced by colours and musical sounds, (and by forms if any part of the pleasure they afford is physical), is probably" [!] "extremely different in different organisations. In natures in which any one of these susceptibilities is originally faint, more will depend on association. The extreme sensibility of this part of our constitution to small and obvious influences, makes it certain that the sources of the feelings of beauty and deformity must be, to a material extent, different in different individuals."

It is surely all but impossible for a thinking man of fair *variety* of susceptibility and knowledge to recall without a kind of resentment that James Mill had the *entire* moulding of a mind like that from which the above paragraph emanated. And here I venture to remark that Mr. John Mill is quite in error in supposing that his father's procedure was never *cram*. His own admissions clearly prove that it often was,—not in its intention but in its working, which was nearly as bad. The *Spectator* rightly said that the *Autobiography* is in many respects a "melancholy" book. It is indeed melancholy to think of the little boy whose father began to

cram Greek down his poor little throat at three years old, being walked forth by his mercoiless Blimber in the Green Lanes, trying to pause upon the "mysterious and intense" pleasure he got out of a blush rose, a foxglove, a bluebell, or a clump of yellow gorse, and then being sat down upon by his father's "discourses" about major and minor premisses, or the agrarian laws in Rome,—certain "severities" which Mr. Mill, even in advanced life, does not like to speak of, being all the while held before him. True, he says all this did not prevent his childhood from being a happy one; but then he has let us into the secret that his ideas of happiness were of a very chastened order. It is a hard thing to say, especially remembering the beautiful attachment that existed between him and his wife and daughter-in-law; but it is true that Mr. Mill could never have known the *abysmal* fountains of enjoyment, or learnt the lessons of passion in the tropical sense. But the defect was more in his training than in his nature.

The dullest reader fixes at once upon one point as to which Mr. Mill's correctness of judgment goes utterly to the wall. He relates the most astounding course of education that ever risked turning a child into an idiot; he tells you of his own extraordinary acquirements as coolly as if he were relating feats in the play-ground; and then he winds up by saying that in the quality of the faculties thus far concerned he was rather below than over the average, and that other children could do the same or better, if the teaching were as good. The *Saturday Review* very naturally and properly inquires if Mr. Mill ever had any experience of children, after he was a man; and I would, myself, give a great deal to know all about *that*. But the case does not stop here. From the directness with which Mr. Mill criticizes his father in some cases, we may infer that had he seen the *real* evil in his father's general system as applied to himself, he would have mentioned it. He has, then, we conclude, failed to perceive *how* his education was eminently calculated to injure him. Nothing could be more mad than to encourage a boy to form opinions on serious questions of history and human conduct before he could by any possibility have acquired the elementary experience or developed the elementary sensibilities that ought to form a large part of his intellectual and moral capital for life.* And Mr. Mill never lost his liability to go too fast and too far ahead of his own emotional experience. In reading some of what he has written upon the population question, the reader—though, like myself, read up in the facts and the speculations, and cherishing none of the usual prejudices upon the subject—cannot but exclaim, "Ah, Mr. Mill! if I could have played special providence to you for five years of your life, what a difference I should have made both in your opinions and your

* Pages 138 to 152 come tantalizingly near to seizing the true point; but they miss it.

methods of propagandism in these matters !” When one reads in the “Political Economy” those sentences about Sismondi and his wife, their domestic happiness, and the duty of a human pair to have no more children than would replace them when dead—one feels a spiteful wish to have it in one’s power to break the heart of theorists of this kind. In fact to say, “Very good ; you shall have two children, boy and girl ; they shall be the light of your lives, the idols of your hearts, the centre of your hopes for the world in the future. And just when your wife is fifty years old they shall both die.” Unfortunately, this is no argument. And if I were to say that there is no branch of speculation, whether as matter of biology or political economy, in which there has been such astounding haste, and rashness of induction upon slender bases, as that which relates to the increase of the human family and the “laws” which are supposed to regulate that increase,—the accredited experts would only sniff the air, without even deigning to say, What do you know about it? One comfort,—any contempt which they might feel for me could not exceed that which I feel for such speculations as some of their own number have been recently indulging in as to improving the human “breed.”

The reader has already noticed that the present writer accepts to the full Mr. Mill’s estimate of his wife. Unless there had been a politely kept-down tendency to make game of it in certain quarters, I should feel it impertinent to say even as much as that. But, in truth, there is nothing unnatural or unlikely or beyond the experience of intelligent men, in the idea of a woman of almost divine genius, with no tendency to exercise her gifts through the ordinary channels. Many a man of large faculties might find himself puzzled to express, much more to explain or justify, an estimate of a woman which he felt rightly sure was well founded, and which he also felt was proved by what she had been to him, and reflexly, through him, to the world. Let me quote here an anecdote about Wordsworth and his wife which Harriet Martineau gives in the notice of De Quincey, published in her “Biographical Sketches” :—

“While so many anecdotes are going of Wordsworth’s fireside, the following ought to be added. An old friend was talking with him by that fireside, and mentioned De Quincey’s magazine articles. Wordsworth begged to be spared any accounts of them, saying that the man had long since passed away from the family life and mind ; and he did not wish to ruffle himself in a useless way about a misbehaviour which could not be remedied. The friend acquiesced, saying, ‘Well, I will tell you only one thing that he says, and then we will talk of other things. He says your wife is too good for you.’ The old poet’s dim eyes lighted up instantly, and he started from his seat, and flung himself against the mantelpiece, with his back to the fire, as he cried, with loud enthusiasm, ‘And that’s true ! There

he is right !' and his disgust and contempt for the traitor were visibly moderated."

What can we say to this ? Wordsworth was a sane, clear-headed man ; and I submit that we can only take his word, given in this form and in his poetry, that his wife really was this "divine thing." While the pen is pausing in my hand, the subject takes a form and colour, and branches off in ways which forbid me to continue it here in this occasional manner. But we must never forget that in Mr. Mill's case we have the noble lady's daughter to speak, in a sense, for her mother. She, too, has written but little (and what of it?), but nobody who has read her attentively will be surprised at the language which her father-in-law applies to her in three or four passages of the Autobiography. Miss Helen Taylor's modesty has led her to break up those passages by the use of asterisks, but we can partly fill in the blanks for ourselves. And if we almost flinch from expressing a fervent hope that she will write more, and continue the tradition which her father-in-law's death breaks off for a while, it is only because we would not be so rude as to dictate, ever so remotely, a path to those finer spirits which so perfectly feel and see their own way.

One of the things said by Mr. Mill about his wife will strongly arrest the attention of those who think, as the present writer has always done, that the transformed Utilitarianism of Mr. Mill was Transcendentalism speaking a new dialect. He says the lady was quick to distinguish between *mala prohibita* and *mala in se*. Having put down the words, he catches himself up with a "that is," and puts his own meaning upon the phrases. But it is too late. No Experimentalist or Utilitarian can make out his right to the distinction in any shape between *mala in se* and *mala prohibita*. To have but let the words fall is (we "transcendental" fellows think) fatal, and final. There is another instance in this volume in which Mr. Mill seems suddenly to wake up to the idea that he is, to say the least, skating on thin ice. It is in the account he gives of the fit of depression which came over him in the midst of his early career. If all his aims as a reformer of mankind were to be accomplished tomorrow, would that make him happy ? His heart says, No. This is only the first step in an obvious procession of thought, of the final bearing of which Mr. Mill betrays a sudden consciousness by telling us with marked emphasis that he still believed, as firmly as ever, in Utility as the moral criterion. Here the ice seems to me as near breaking under the performer's feet as in that startling passage in the essay on "Utilitarianism" in which the essayist goes in for a hierarchy of pleasures with the astounding practical corollary that in case of dispute as to the precedence of one of two pleasures those who have tasted both are to decide, or, in case of difference of opinion, the majority of them.

I cannot forbear putting side by side with all this, a passage from another writer :—

“ If a man persists to inquire why he ought to promote the happiness of mankind, he demands a mathematical or metaphysical reason for a moral action. The absurdity of this scepticism is more apparent, but not less real than the exacting a moral reason for a mathematical or metaphysical fact. If any person should refuse to admit that all the radii of a circle are of equal length, or that human actions are necessarily determined by motives, until it could be proved that these radii and these actions uniformly tended to the production of the greatest general good, who would not wonder at the unreasonable and capricious association of his ideas ! ”

When Shelley wrote thus in his “ *Speculations on Morals*,” he actually called himself a Utilitarian, though in the previous chapter he had laid down in form the postulates of what most persons call Intuitional Morality.

A word must be said concerning Mr. Mill's account of his parliamentary career. I agree with the *Spectator* that this is a little egotistical, and Mr. Herbert Spencer himself says that in his latter years Mr. Mill was ageing fast ; whilst either he or some kindred reminiscent adds that the conversation of this great and good man had latterly taken a retrospective turn. But if ever a man was provoked by gross unfairness to egotism, it was Mr. Mill in this case. Looked at simple-heartedly, his short parliamentary career seems to me to have been one of the very finest things on record of any public man. Yet it was continually being snapped and yelped at by one cur or another ; and it was harshly, if not a little enviously, criticised by many who were not curs at all. It was a relief when it came to an end, not because it was not up to the mark, but because it was a case of casting pearls before swine. In this posthumous piece of self-justification there may be something abated of Mr. Mill's usual dignity, but more shame to those who stung him into the error—not for their exercising the right of criticism, but for the baseness of moral tone which they displayed.

As I am compelled even to omit much of my material relating directly to the “ *Autobiography*,” I must put off the short examination of Mr. Fitzjames Stephen's “ *Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity*” which it was my design to attempt in this little article. Almost everybody who is likely to have read the preceding paragraphs is likely to know that the doctrine of Mr. Mill's “ *Liberty* ” is mine too. Mr. Stephen has not, in my opinion, answered that magnificent book, or even caught its argument. But his vigorous and often eloquent and affecting discussions bring into strong relief what I also believe—namely that the doctrine of “ *Liberty* ” cannot be finally established upon a merely Utilitarian basis. It has often escaped my pen that Mr. Mill in that book and in the “ *Subjection of Women* ”

is found assuming data for which no form of Experientialism has room. Mr. Stephen puts this in a strong light, and we on the other side are much obliged to him. But the real question remains untouched. Let us take it as it is briefly put in Mr. Samuel Bailey's essay on the Publication of Opinions :—

"We cannot discover a standard of truth in the opinions of the majority of mankind, otherwise we might ascertain all truth by the simple process of counting votes. The majority of mankind are seldom free from error ; they have often held opinions the most absurd, and at different times have entertained contradictory propositions. It would be equally vain to look for a standard of truth in the judgments of any particular class of human beings. No rank, no office, no privileges, no attainments in wisdom or science, can be a security from error. Bodies of men, who have assumed infallibility, have, hitherto, always been mistaken. Since, then, we have no fixed standard by which we can in all cases try the validity of opinions, as we can measure time and space ; since we have no oracles of indisputable authenticity, or at least of incontrovertible meaning ; since we cannot ascertain truth by putting opinions to the vote, nor by an appeal to any class or order of men, how are we to attain it, or by what means escape from error ?"

Now Mr. Bailey is, in my opinion, a more consistent Utilitarian than Mr. Mill in his way of treating these questions, and he makes out for liberty in the publication of opinions a case which I should have been glad indeed to see Mr. Stephen attack. But, then, the point arises :—Every act, considered as a subject of moral criticism, may be treated as involving a moral dictum,—in other words, an opinion. So then, the Utilitarian argument which is good for Opinion is good for Action. Or, if not, why not ? It would of course be from mere malice that I should put the question thus ; but how could Mr. Bailey dodge it without shunting back, or how could he answer it on the rails he has laid down without leaping his engine and train into a gulf ?

One word more. Any dislike which the more soft-hearted among us may feel of James Mill's aridity of nature must not prevent our gratefully acknowledging the earnest conscientiousness of his method with his son. If other fathers were as bent upon their children's "escaping not only the corrupting influence which boys exercise over boys, but the contagion of vulgar modes of thought and feeling" (page 35), we should have a very much better world. There are always plenty of parents to carry on the traditions of vulgarity and corruption in education. What we want is a little more of James Mill's heroism, even at the cost of blunders as sad as his.

HENRY HOLBEACH.

MR. CARINGTON.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ROLLO.

Astrologos. He has come back again, you see. I knew he would.
One of these nights the drowsy-eyed astronomer,
Watching the stars in an enormous speculum,
Will start to see the missing Pleiad back again.

The Comedy of Dreams.

THERE entered a tall man, light-haired, bright-eyed, loosely built, carelessly dressed, looking as if he had no fear or care in the world. Two of our party scrutinized him curiously as he walked easily across the Hall, looking as though it belonged to him; those two were the Marchesa and Mr. Carington. Before he had time to speak, little Raffaella had sprung from her chair, and caught him in a tight embrace, exclaiming,—

“Leo!”

Leo quietly extricated himself, passed his hand over Raffaella's hair, and then spoke,—

“I am rather perplexed; I wished to see Lord Delamere, but find he has retired. Perhaps the best thing I can do is to retire also, and return at a more seasonable time.”

“Certainly not,” said Mr. Carington, rising and coming close to him, and drawing him aside. “Why, Rollo, how is it you are not drowned? You were drowned in the papers some years ago, and have no right at all to come to life again. Are you quite sure you are my dear old Rollo? It seems hard to think there could be anybody so wonderfully like him.”

“O, I am Rollo Delamere,” he said, tossing back his long locks of hair. “They said I was drowned: O that was years ago; I did not care to contradict them. I have been wandering all over the world.”

“Yes; then I was not mistaken, I saw you in Bond Street the other day,” interrupted Carington.

“Ah, likely enough. Well, here I am. Introduce me and give me some supper. I suppose my venerable father has retired for the night.”

“He has,” said Mr. Carington, “but he will be devilish glad to see you to-morrow, old fellow. As to introducing you, you seem to know the Marchesa Ravioli as well as I do. The other lady will perhaps be rather startled when I introduce you; therefore, if you will come away with me for a few minutes, I will tell you who she is, and I will then prepare her for an introduction to you.”

“Who can she be!” said Rollo, as he walked out of the Hall with Mr. Carington.

This conversation had been carried on out of hearing of Frank, and Elinor, and the Marchesa. They had been anxiously watching the stranger, and wondering when there would be an introduction.

"Who can he be?" said Elinor. "I have never heard of a Mr. Delamere visiting here. What a fine fellow he is!"

"Oh! he is not Mr. Delamere, he is my Leo," said the Marchesa. "I am quite safe now he has come. He is such a strong brave fellow."

"I think I know who he is," said Frank, "for I heard Mr. Carington address him by his Christian name. And it is curious that I happened to travel in the carriage with him to Carlisle. You must expect another surprise, Elinor; for I think this is a relation of yours who was supposed to be dead."

"A relation of mine! How many more relations am I going to discover suddenly? But what can he be? Is he my brother? I did not know that I ever had one."

"No, you never had a brother, Elinor," said Frank.

"How do you know?"

"I have heard your history to-day, and intended relating all to you, but we have had so much to talk about, that I have not had time yet. Do you know of any relation that was supposed to be drowned?"

"Yes; I have heard that my father was drowned, but this cannot be my father; he is too young."

"O, suppose it is!" said the Marchesa, "what fun it will be that my Leo should be your father?"

At this moment Carington walked into the Hall alone. Elinor did not give him time to speak, but ran up to him, and said,—

"Is it my father, Mr. Carington?"

"Yes, child; how did you know it?"

"Frank guessed it. May I see him?"

Carington left the hall, and returned with Rollo, saying gravely,—

"Miss Delamere . . . Lord Rookwood."

"What a wonderful fellow you are, Carington! I had quite forgotten I was Lord Rookwood, by courtesy. And pray who is this charming Miss Delamere?"

The stalwart stranger was holding Elinor's hands and looking into her eyes.

"If you don't know your own daughter, Rollo, it's your own fault," said Mr. Carington; "I can vouch for her, since she has been under my care from her birth."

"This is my daughter, is she? She does you credit, Carington, at any rate. I have to thank you for the pleasantest surprise you could have given me. What is your name, my child?"

"Elinor," she said, with tears in her beautiful eyes. Frank Noel thought he had never seen anything so lovely, as this tall graceful girl looking up wonderingly into her father's face. Rollo sitting on the chair from which she had risen, drew her caressingly towards him, and put his arm around her, and said,—

"Are you glad to find you have a father, Elinor?"

"I am, indeed," she said.

"I must introduce Mr. Frank Noel to you, Rookwood," said Mr. Carington. "He is my godson, and aspires to be your son-in-law. The Earl has consented: perhaps you will be more difficult."

"Mr. Noel and I were travelling companions from London to Carlisle," said Rollo, "and a very pleasant companion I found him."

"I listened very well," said Frank, with a smile.

Rollo laughed till the great hall rang again.

"I did do most of the talking, I believe," he said. "As to you and my Elinor, Mr. Noel, it seems to me that I have no right to say a word. While I have been wandering all over the face of the earth, like a certain gentleman mentioned in the Book of Job, my dear friend Carington has made her what she is, partly for my sake, partly for her mother's."

"More than either for her own," said Mr. Carington, and Elinor gave him a grateful smile.

"So," continued Lord Rookwood, "if the Earl approves, and Carington approves, that is enough."

"No, it isn't, papa," said Elinor. "You must approve too. I am too proud of my father, to let him give up his authority over me. So, Frank," she went on, looking over her shoulder at her lover, "you will have to ask papa."

"I am forgetting hospitality," said Mr. Carington. "What will you have in the way of supper, Rollo? I am obliged to act for the Earl when he is in his rooms."

"Something devilled," he said. "By the way, my man, old Wolf, is somewhere outside: he may as well come in here, for he is more my comrade than my servant."

Orders were given. The gaunt old man, with a travelling bag in one hand, and his master's lion-skin over his arm, entered the hall. Two or three mastiffs and bloodhounds came round him, sniffing at the skins.

"Dogs hate cats," said Rollo, "and know a catskin when they see it. Of all cats the lion is, I think, the cowardliest. I can quite believe the stories of Hercules and Samson killing lions unarmed. A giant negro in mid-Africa was surprised by a lion: he thrust his hands into the brute's mouth, and positively pulled out his tongue, and the creature ran howling away, leaving him with only a few ribs broken."

"O, don't tell horrid stories, Leo," cried Raffaella. "Come, we are quite a cosy party. Let us enjoy ourselves, we five: tell adventures, if you like, but let them be love-adventures."

"I never had one in all my wanderings," he said. "The nearest thing was when you and I met at Venice: do you remember that moonlight night, when we were in a gondola together, and you sang delicious little songs that you made at the moment, words and air and all. Do you remember?"

His fine tenor voice became more musical as he recited :—

“No clouds have we but two or three
That dance around the moon ;
Our skiff flies fair through summer air
Across the blue lagoon.

“Light ripples float around our boat,
And glancing moonbeams play ;
O when the night is sweet, soft, bright,
It never should be day.”

“Fancy your remembering my nonsense,” said the little lady in white, evidently well pleased. “Ah, it *was* pleasant in Venice. Was it not ?”

“It is pleasant here,” said Rollo, rising to walk to a table in the next angle where supper was served. The news that it was for the Earl’s long-lost son, had somehow reached the kitchen—what news does not ?—and Rachette had come out of his private room, throwing aside his favourite Balzac, to do something piquant and unique. Very pleasant was the aroma from the silver dishes when the covers were removed. “Now, old dog,” said Rollo to his faithful retainer, “you and I have eaten many meals together in many queer places : come and eat your first meal with me in my father’s house.”

Master and servant sat down together ; Elinor and Raffaella came to wait upon them and serve their wine. Mr. Carington and Frank looked on with amusement.

“This is fine old Madeira, Carington,” said Rollo : “but in a house like this, I’ll swear there’s old ale. Gods, how I longed for a draught of old ale when I was on the Arizona mountains !”

An obsequious footman had heard the remark, and came with a quart silver tankard foaming at the brim, saying,—

“This is the very hold hale, your lordship.”

Rollo laughed. He raised the great tankard to his lips and drank the whole at a draught, to the amazement of everybody except Wolf, who nodded his head sideways, like some quaint old bird, when the ale had vanished. Then looking up at Elinor, who had just helped him to something eatable, he said,—

“Ditto for Wolf, please, Miss.”

“What *does* he mean, papa ?” she said.

“Why that he’d like some of the *hold hale*,” said Rollo, in a musical whisper. “Wine’s lost upon Wolf, unless you give it him in a small cask.”

Wolf was furnished with what he desired. Supper over, Rollo sprang up like a giant refreshed, and said,—

“Now, Carington, as I know you are not tired—in fact, I don’t think you ever knew what it is to be tired—shall we have a chat ? If one of the footmen will show Wolf my room, he’ll make things

ready for me. Your godson and my daughter can go into a corner and prattle ; Raffaella can go to bed, but I want a good talk with you before seeing my father to-morrow."

"I am not going to bed yet," said the Marchesa. "Mr. Noel and Elinor can come and talk in my room : then you will be comfortable, I hope, you selfish Leo."

He lifted her by the waist like a child, and put her on his shoulder.

"Now," he said, "shall I carry you to bed, or will you go quietly?"

"You strong monster!" cried Raffaella, when she found herself on the floor. "Good-night, I am afraid of you."

"Good-night, papa," said Elinor ; and as he kissed her, how thankful she felt that her father was not lost to her ! Poor child ! she had never felt the unutterable loneliness of some orphans, who are left on the hands of splenetic uncles and tartaric aunts, or are immured within the walls of charitable institutions. She had always had Mr. Carington for a friend : and how true and wise a friend he always was ! But lo, now there had come to her an accession of riches : a lover, a grandfather, a father ! She had yet to hear the whole story, and it was very soon told her : but she had no natural inquisitiveness, and waited patiently.

The loss of a father in childhood is one of the deepest misfortunes that can occur. Up to a certain age children want the mother's guidance : but when they are on the verge of manhood and womanhood, it is the father's wider experience, and stronger control, that is urgently needed. Nothing can make up for the absence of this. Mr. Browning makes Mildred in *The Blot on the 'Scutcheon*, say,

"I had
No mother—God forgot me—so I fell."

But, with due deference to the great authority of that illustrious poet, I hold that the presence of a wise father (or of such an elder brother as Thorold) is even a stronger safeguard against such a fall.

Elinor almost forgot her happy love in this last happiness caused by her father's return. She could not sleep for delight. Rollo's strangely musical voice rang in his daughter's ears ; when at last she slept it mingled with her dreams, as the chimes of a cathedral haunt the visions of one who sleeps within earshot of them. And when she awoke in the morning, the voice still spoke to her ; and when she went to the window, she saw her father and her lover and Mr. Carington climbing the fell in the golden March sunshine.

A long long talk had Mr. Carington and Rollo, after the others had gone : so long that the great wood-fire was dying, and the sunlight was invading the hall windows, when they went to bed. For Rollo

told his friend the whole story of his wild wanderings, too long a story to be told here : and Carington listened quietly, always amused, and sometimes amazed.

"I have been a fool, Frank," said Rollo, "but I think the folly has been pretty well crushed out of me. Gods ! when I was the other side of the world, how I longed to see England ! How I longed for oaks and elms, for primroses and violets—for a good glass of ale ! My dear Carington, I positively longed for bread and butter, a thing which I never eat if I can help it. And then I wanted to see this old place. I had never seen it ; but there was a picture of it in an old book about English country houses ; and I used to dream, when I was camping out in wild places, or sleeping in a sailing boat, while old Wolf steered, of being at home here, and seeing my father again. What will he say to me, Frank ?"

"He will be delighted to see you. He, like you, has improved with years. I came here to fight Elinor's battle ; I was resolved to make him acknowledge her : the main difficulty was, that he had an illegitimate daughter of his own here, a very nice girl, whom I was quite sorry to get sent away. She is his only memorial of the days when he was a parson."

"She is provided for, of course."

"O, yes. And she is a very good girl. At present she is with her mother, but I intend to look after her by-and-by, when events more important are settled. By the way, the Marchesa Ravioli says you are a conspirator : is that true ?"

"Only an amateur. I have been drawn into one or two plots, but when I found they meant assassination I gave it up, and tried to make Raffaella do the same. But she went on—for *fun*, she used to say."

"Foolish child ! I made rather a startling stroke when I took her out of town the other day." And Mr. Carington told the story.

"Delightful !" laughed Rollo. "And what did Number One say, I wonder ?"

"He is in a terrible fright, I hear, from one cause and another. I should think he must be the unhappiest man on the earth's surface."

"He is the meanest," said Rollo. "How odd you should have seen me in Bond Street—or Brook Street, was it ? I had been to have my hair cut at Truefitt's ; it was about twice as long as it is now. The fellow looked thunderstruck, and thought Absalom had come to life again. By the way, I went down to Warwick when I came home, and heard of poor Theresa's death, . . . and that you had taken charge of the child. I did not go near the Bullivant family, but got my information from an old man at Lord Leicester's Hospital. But he did not know whether the child was boy or girl."

"You might have looked me up before now, Rollo," said Mr. Carington.

"I distrusted myself," he replied. "I was afraid my old roving restless disposition might return, and that I might fly off suddenly without being able to check myself. So I thought it best to wait awhile, and try if I was really cured, before taking my place in society. I think I am pretty sane now: I don't care to wander any more: if my father can tolerate me, I should like to stay here and take care of him. And now tell me of Frank Noel."

"Frank is a good fellow, slow but full of power, with about a thousand a year of his own. He was quite frightened when he found he had been making love to the heiress of the Delameras. Your return will be a relief to him; for you will be sure to marry again and to have a son; then he will be free to do what he wants, that is, to turn farmer."

"Don't you think I'm too old to look for a bride?" said Rollo, running his fingers through his magnificent long beard of silvery amber.

"Not a whit. You *must* marry. You may have your pick among the heiresses and beauties of England. You are in the prime of life, healthy and handsome, heir to an ancient earldom and a princely property. If you were known to be in London, you would be literally hunted down by tender mothers, anxious for the temporal welfare of their daughters. You are not safe, even here, the moment your arrival is known. Look out for the worst, my dear Rollo."

"Look out for the best, I should think you mean. To tell truth, Frank, I do not object to marrying again. If Elinor were not going to run away, I should not have thought of it; but as she is, I fancy the best thing I can do is to try and find somebody. What say you?"

"I say yes. You have plenty of choice; princesses of the blood royal excepted, you may throw your handkerchief where you like."

"Are Englishwomen so sordid?" said Rollo.

"It is not that they are so sordid; but a lady of high birth does not care to marry beneath her. This limits her range of choice. Enters on the arena a handsome fellow, not too young nor too old, heir to an ancient peerage, and to a rent-roll of a quarter million. *Can* she resist?"

"I suppose that's what people call love now-a-days. Well, I married once to spite you, old fellow; now I must marry to fulfil the duties of my station. I think I had better advertise."

"I think we had better go to bed," said Mr. Carington—for sleepy housemaids with long-handled brushes were entering the Hall.

That morning, four or five hours later, Elinor saw the three gentlemen ascending the fell. They came in to breakfast with ruddy complexions and immense appetites; Rachette had gone in for superb combinations of *rognons*, *homards*, *pigeonneaux*, *hûîtres*, in honour of Lord Rookwood; but Rollo breakfasted on a mighty junk of Canterbury brawn, and a tankard of his favourite ale.

"About my father, Carington," he said, presently, standing with his back to the fire, and holding his quart tankard in his hand. "I suppose you had better see him first and prepare him for the return of the Prodigal son."

"Perhaps it is best," said Mr. Carington. "It shall be just as you like. The Earl is not easily frightened."

At this moment Elinor gave a slight start: looking up, Rollo saw his father before him, white-haired, bent from his fine old stateliness, leaning on his ivory-handled staff, with an imperishable fire in his eyes. Father and son looked at each other across the breakfast table for a moment.

"It is very strange," said the Earl, slowly. "I dreamt last night that Rollo had come back: and *you . . . are . . . Rollo.*"

"I am Rollo, father," he said, coming round the table and taking his father's hand. "I am that scapegrace. I have wandered all over the world, and am home at Delamere at last. Am I welcome?"

"I always believed you would come, Rollo," said the Earl. "I knew you weren't drowned. Of late years I have looked up expecting to see you every time a door opened. Yes, my dear boy, I welcome you . . . and here is your daughter, who welcomes you too. Don't you, Elinor?"

Elinor could scarcely speak. The meeting between her father and her father's father seemed to her so strange and wonderful and beautiful an event. It came upon her, after her long orphanhood, as an almost intolerable joy.

"Rollo," said the Earl, "if you have breakfasted, come and tell me your story. You will find me terribly troublesome. You remind me of my own youth: but you are better and stronger than I ever was."

The Earl and his son left the Hall, stalwart Rollo supporting his father, and seeming to communicate new life to the old man. That was the notion passing through Mr. Carington's brain: he said,

"Rollo will give his father another ten years of life, at least."

"Do you think so?" said Elinor.

"I do indeed. You will help, you know, my child. But the Earl will now be able to have his immense estates well managed without trouble to himself: and he will see in Rollo a second self, in the prime of life, ready for anything. Your father will marry again, Elinor. He will give you a stepmother."

"He ought to marry," said Frank Noel, "for his own sake and mine. It is his duty to produce an Earl of Delamere."

"How do you know Elinor does not want to be Countess of Delamere?" asked Mr. Carington.

"She would rather buy a farm with old Matt Noel's twenty thousand pounds, which are her property. She wants to milk cows and make cream and put morellas in brandy, as she used on that famous old Devonshire farm. She would rather be a farmer's wife than a Countess, wouldn't you, Elinor?"

"I would indeed," she said.

The Marchesa threw up her hands in sheer amazement.

"Ah, but I would rather be the Countess," she said. "I do not understand this fancy. Give me a great Hall, like this . . . equipages, horses, grooms, maids, diamonds, ah! and lace . . . if I sold my soul to the Prince of Darkness, it would be to have the loveliest lace in the world. Now, to be a farmer's wife!—O Elinor! It is dreadful to think of. But I have always said it: you English are all mad. The rich want to be poor and the poor want to be rich: and you like paying taxes, and foggy weather and beer. To think of my Leo emptying that enormous metal vessel filled with beer. I will never speak to him again, never, never."

"Different people have different ideas, Raffaella, dear," said Mr. Carington. "You would make a charming Countess: so would Elinor. But my Elinor has simpler tastes, and thinks Devonshire cream better than confectioners' ices, and would rather milk a cow than flirt with a fool. I am not going to decide between two ladies. The first fellow on record who decided between ladies paid pretty dearly for it."

"And who was he?"

"Paris. He had three to deal with. They all undressed that he might decide."

"How shocking you are, Frank," said the Marchesa. "Don't talk in that way before a little girl like Elinor."

"To be sure," said Mr. Carington. "Thank you, Raffaella. Elinor, consider yourself sent back to the nursery. But now for a serious topic, how do you like your father?"

Elinor did not at once reply. In a few moments she said:—

"He is *strong*."

"I know what you mean," said Mr. Carington. "It is his character in three words. The eccentricities of his youth were the result of uncontrolled strength. As a boy, he flogged his schoolmaster. He has been wearing out his strength upon wild rough adventure for the last twenty years. He has almost weakened himself down to the average, but not quite. His father and his daughter must keep him in order now."

"We will try," said Elinor. "But what grand power he would have, if there were fighting to be done. I defy a soldier to flinch, with my father at the front of battle."

"You look like Joan of Arc yourself," said Frank Noel. "If the French invade England, you will be leading a brigade of *califourchon* Amazons."

"The French will not invade England or any other country during this century," said Mr. Carington. "I don't know what is to become of the French. I am interested in their future, because they grow several wines that I like. On the other hand, they grow a great number of ideas that I don't like. Ideas are more important than wines."

"The French are rather proud of producing ideas," said Frank Noel.

"Self-delusion, hallucination, humbug," said Mr. Carington. "A noble idea can no more be born among the French than a white baby among negroes. They are good at mathematics and memoirs. Their language is incapable of carrying poetry. A nation that cannot, by the nature of things, produce a poet, must be in bad case. The great mistake the French people have made, is this; they were born to buy and sell, and they fancy they were born to fight. Now I would back Frank Noel, there, to put to death any two Frenchmen who attacked him."

"They don't seem to know much about boxing and wrestling, sir," says Frank, "from what I hear. But they are good fencers."

"Weak in the wrist, Frank," says Mr. Carington. "But come, what shall we do this morning? On an irregular and exciting day like this, everybody feels restless. The Earl and his son will be shut up together all the morning. Suppose we go up to that little haunted tarn on the fell side, and tell the servants to bring up luncheon and some rugs for the ladies. That will be a nice lazy way of spending the morning. We are all unquiescent, effervescent, incandescent: I can see by Frank's eyes that he would like to put on the gloves with somebody: and as to Raffaella, she reminds one of my old friend Luttrell's verse,

'Methinks the Furies with their snakes,
Or Venus with her zone might gird her;
Of fiend and goddess she partakes,
And looks at once both Love and Murder.'

Come, shall we walk off our restlessness?"

It was agreed. They clomb the fell side. They reached the mystic tarn and picnicked there. It was intensely pleasant. The March wind had blown itself to sleep, and in the delicious sunshiny lull there was faint fragrance of April's violets in the air. And the Marchesa sang . . . she couldn't help it . . .

"O wonderful wild world of ours!
O spring's soft breath!
O coming kisses—coming flowers—
And coming death!"

"The flower's a fruit, the kiss a boy,
The maid a wife—
And sorrow is the root of joy,
And death is life."

"I'll ask Rollo to throw you into the mere if you sing such melancholy songs," said Mr. Carington.

"I don't call that at all melancholy," said Elinor.

CHAPTER XL.

FORD'S FARM.

Raphael. My Alouette, where shall we spend our honeymoon?

Alouette. In the old cottage by the haunted waterfall,
Where the spring violets were always earliest,
Clusters of scented snow, and where miraculous
Rainbows were mirrored in the shattered rivulet.

The Comedy of Dreams.

THE Earl of Delamere and Rollo cried so completely, to use a schoolboy's word, that Elinor saw very little of her father except at dinner, and during the evening. It is not recorded that she complained: somehow or other she and Frank Noel were all-sufficient for each other: and as an early spring had come upon the Land of Lakes, they enjoyed their wooing out of doors, and made a merry time of it. Frank felt satisfied now: his Elinor would not be a countess, he was sure: they might live the quiet life which would arride them both. For neither had any ambition or restlessness: they were curiously alike in loving tranquillity, the country, the beauty and friendliness of nature, all things innocent and calm. Hence it was really a relief to both to find the burden of a peerage and great estates removed from them for a time, if not altogether. Rollo, Lord Rookwood, everybody could see had Herculean shoulders that would bear an Empire: he relieved his father with as little effort as it cost the demigod to relieve poor weary old Atlas. Stewards and bailiffs and gamekeepers found they had to wake up when Lord Rookwood's quick eye was on them, when he told them his commands in that voice of marvellous music: his unfatiguable energy gave life to everybody, and the change in the state of affairs was astonishing. Rollo took work easily; did as much in an hour as any other man would have achieved in a day; never turned a hair, but was ready for his dinner and his ale, and an after dinner flirtation with Raffaella. Mr. Carington was herewith delighted—he had made up his mind that these two would suit admirably. Raffaella needed a master and Rollo wanted a toy.

One day after dinner he lazily stretched himself in his chair by the fire, like one of the Delamere mastiffs, and gave a mighty laugh which rang to the roof of the hall.

"Why, papa," said Elinor, who was sitting on a stool at his feet, "what *are* you laughing at?"

"At my own thoughts, Nell, and they were about you and Frank. The Earl and I have been talking gravely about you, this morning. He thinks it is high time you were married: I agree with him. Come, fix the day, and let us decide whom to invite."

Elinor pinched her troublesome progenitor, who pulled her pretty little shell of an ear, and said,

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, let the debate commence."

"The sooner the better, for Elinor and me," said Frank, gaily. "We are ready to fight the battle of life, as some fellows say, somewhere. I should like to get my dear old uncle the Canon to come and marry us, if he is well enough."

"I'll go and fetch him," said Mr. Carington. "But now I have a point to mention which perhaps you may think premature. Where are these two children to live, Rollo?"

"Egad, of that I never thought. Here, if they like; it is big enough, this old house, and my father and I don't want to be left alone in it. Or if not, we have two or three other houses. There is a charming place near Glastonbury, I find, with a real ghost. It has been let to a stockbroker, but the ghost has been too much for him, and he wants to go."

"Ah, but Frank wants to farm, don't you, Frank?"

"Yes," said Frank, who by this time had got so remarkably close to Elinor that the mischievous Marchesa could not help pelting them with ratañas and sugar-plums from the dessert, which missiles Frank quietly devoured. "Yes, I mean farming: it is what I am most fit for."

"Do you remember Ford's Farm, Elinor?" asked Mr. Carington.

"Do I not?" she said. "I always thought it the loveliest place in the world. I wonder whether I should think so now. Such dear quaint old-fashioned rooms and gardens—such a lovely sea and sands. Now that is where I should like to live."

Rollo rolled forth thunderous music of laughter.

"My daughter a farmer's wife!" he exclaimed; "you would soon get tired, Nell."

"No, Papa, I have tried it and liked it. I can milk a cow beautifully. When you come and see us you shall have *such* cream."

"It is an odd coincidence," said Mr. Carington, "that only a few months ago I bought Ford's Farm. The man who succeeded to it on Miss Ford's death was a bad manager, and had a large family: and when he got into difficulties he wrote to me for advice. I advised him to emigrate, which he did: and I bought the farm, having always liked the old place since my little Elinor ran about it. Now, Frank, you may have it, if you like, for the price I gave: and I believe it is undervalued, though I gave the poor fellow exactly what he asked. I think he was so eager to escape from his difficulties that he named too low a price: but I am no judge of such things, so perhaps it is the other way."

Elinor was delighted.

"O Mr. Carington!" she said, "this is the most charming thing you could have suggested. Frank, we must go there. And we'll spend our honeymoon in putting things straight. Let us buy it directly."

"I think you are remarkably well suited," said Rollo. "Now there is nothing left except to fix the wedding day. *Settlements*, some people would say, but the Earl won't hear of it: settlements and trusts

and the like, he says, were meant to worry honest people and bring money to the lawyers : he'll make Elinor a present on her wedding day, and she can pass it on to her husband if she likes. I cordially agree with my father."

"Ah," said the Marchesa, in a tone that seemed a sigh, "but for the complications of family property, I should not for so many years have been miserable."

"Never mind, Raffaella, you are happy now," said Mr. Carington.

"No, I am not."

"Why not?" asked Rollo.

"Why not? Shall I sing you why not? Come."

She ran to the piano and made a brilliant chaos of musical noise. She sang—

"How can I be happy, when
Each minute that swiftly flies
Finds me and leaves me lonely?
When the crowd of women and men
Pass on, and no one cries—
'It is you I love, you only.'

"The girl is happy, whose eyes
Have eyes that were born their twins,
To make her heart beat faster.
The girl is happy, who flies
Into the woods, and wins
A kiss from her wooer and master.

"O for the velvet turf!
O for the summer sun!
For the fairy ferns that flutter!
For the song of the silver surf!
For the word that only one—
One in the world can utter!"

"I call that an uncommonly pretty little song, Raffaella," said Rollo, "and you shall be appropriately rewarded."

Whereupon he kissed the little improvisatrice, and she called him a tyrannical monster. She invented a new name for him daily, and he took them in the best of humours.

The talk of this evening led to farther talk : and finally it was arranged that Frank and Elinor should be married on the first of June. About the beginning of May, Mr. Carington caused the stalwart roan stallion to be saddled, and took leave of his friends for a week. He told Rollo to console the Earl, and the Marchesa to console Rollo : he left Frank and Elinor to their own devices, fully aware that they would not know whether he was in the house or out of it. He rode off on a joyous May morning, and passed the first evening at the King's Arms, Lancaster, unhaunted by the ghosts that disturbed the idle and industrious apprentices. He rode

right away down through Manchester, Matlock (its tors green with spring), Derby, Nottingham, and Leicester, to Warwick, where he made a few inquiries about the Bullivant family, and lunched with the Earl. Thence through Buckingham to Oxford, his old university, where he stopped a day or two with an old friend, a Fellow of Maudlin, who had been digging up Greek roots and drinking port wine all his life, and who now regretted that he had never married.

"That's about the only thing I don't regret," said Mr. Carington.

At Wallingford he turned westward, and made his way to Bath, where in old days he had seen some sharp hunting in Pulteney Street. Days wholly past; Bath is an innocent city. Mr. Carington found it deadly dull, and pursued his westward way through Bristol and Exeter till he reached Kingsbridge and Ford's Farm.

He had put in a respectable man and his wife as managers. Everything was shipshape. The old books and old furniture that Elinor knew in her childhood were there still. But Mr. Carington had decided to brighten the place a little: so, when passing through Exeter, he had desired an upholsterer of that city to come down and take his orders. The tradesman was intelligent: and Ford's Farm was eventually made ready to receive Elinor in quite its old style, but freshened and filled with colour. Some days Mr. Carington spent here, arranging everything, and especially desirous that there should be horses for Frank to ride, and red Devon kine for Elinor to milk. Then he rode homeward through North Devon, as far as Ilfracombe, cutting across country thence to drowsy Wells and legendary Glastonbury. At a village in that vale of Avalon he made pause, with the object of finding Lucy Walter. A charming sleepy village, buried in apple trees that might have been coeval with King Arthur, and that were now drowned in those pink and white blossoms that even Mr. Millais cannot quite imitate. A few houses, pargeted and gabled; an inn, the Delamere Arms; a pretty little girl in rustic dress sitting in a little garden, by a little cottage porch, all looking like picture rather than reality. She was knitting, or something of the kind: the sunlight fell lovingly through apple leafage on her unkerchief curls.

Down the village street walks the stately roan, with a rider who looks young till you observe his face. Mr. Carington always looks young on horseback. He is of the type of Cheiron the centaur. When he leaps into the saddle it invigorates him; gives him youth again; gives him power. One of those few men is he who make their horse a part of themselves: who in return for his strength and speed, give the creature they bestride their brain. The meaning of the great Centaur legend lies in this.

Lucy would not have been Lucy if the unusual sound of horses' hoofs in this somnolent village of Avalon had not caused her to raise her eyes from her knitting. Lucy would not have been Lucy if she had not run down the garden path as fast as her pretty feet could

carry her, when she saw the cavalier dismount at the wicket gate, and leave his horse standing in the road.

"O Mr. Carington," she cried, with tears in her eyes, "how glad I am to see you! How is Lord Delamere?"

"Much better. I am down here on some business for him, so I thought I would look in upon you and see if you were happy. Are you?"

"O yes," she said. "It is very quiet, and I should like to see Lord Delamere again; but I really am happy, Mr. Carington."

"You did not know of course, Lucy," said Mr. Carington, "that the Earl had a son, who was supposed to be drowned at sea. He has returned home safely, and that of course has made Lord Delamere much happier."

"O how glad I am!" said Lucy. "But when do you think he will let me see him again?"

"Be patient, my child," said Mr. Carington, "I will take care that you are not forgotten."

Mr. Carington rode across through Castle Cary to Salisbury: it was late in the evening, so he entered the archway of the White Hart, and gave careful orders about his horse, and then thought of himself. At dinner he asked the waiter how Canon Lovelace was.

"O, the old gentleman is quite well again now, sir, and goes down to the Cathedral two or three times a-week. But Mr. Pinniger, sir, will be in the billiard room presently, and he can tell you, because he sees the Canon almost every day."

Mr. Carington had in his time seen nearly enough of billiards, a game which can only be successfully played by men of small brain: however, he decided to see Pinniger, and so lounged into the White Hart billiard-room at about ten. The lawyer was there, but not playing. Mr. Carington's first introduction to him had been as a baby in long clothes, and he never could see him without remembering that he had desperately attempted to choke himself by swallowing a receipt for a quarter's rent.

"Mr. Carington," exclaimed Pinniger, when he saw him, "you are indeed welcome to our dull city. Do you stay long?"

"Only a day or two. I hear the Canon is better."

"O, he is well. He only wants something to enliven him. If he could see Frank, now."

"Do you think he is well enough to travel?"

"I think, and the doctor thinks, that change would do him good."

"Well, I am here to try and persuade him to make a change. Frank is going to be married to Lord Delamere's granddaughter on the first of June: we want the Canon to come and perform the ceremony. Couldn't you bring him up to Delamere, and stay a few days. We don't want you as a lawyer, for when somebody talked of settlements, the Earl said, 'Damn settlements!'"

"I quite agree with his lordship," said Pinniger. "Settlements are intended for the nutrition of lawyers."

"Well, will you come? And there's a young parson who was a great crony of Frank's: do you think he would come and help the Canon. The Earl will make all Frank's friends welcome. He is uncommonly fond of him. Of course you know that he and Frank's father were great friends, and that he killed Captain Noel in a duel."

"I remember something about it," said the lawyer.

"I was there," said Mr. Carington. "Now you must decide to come, and bring Frank's other friend. Can't you induce him to look in upon me here to-morrow? I shall not go to see the Canon till nearly noon."

"I will try," said the lawyer.

"Those twenty bank notes were a famous find," said Mr. Carington.

"Were they not?" said Pinniger. "Do you know, I have never said a word about them in Salisbury or elsewhere, except to the bankers; but I should like to do so one of these days, that people might know what a fine old fellow Matthew Noel was."

"It should be done, and shall," said Mr. Carington. "What did the Bank of England people think of those notes?"

"O, it was a comedy! I took them to town myself. I bank with Drummonds, so I went there first, told them as much as I thought necessary of the affair, and got one of their chief men to go down with me to the Bank of England. When I got there I went to the proper department, shoved in my bundle of notes, requested change in gold. The Clerk at the Counter lost his head at once, and after a feeble attempt to say nothing particular, sent for the Inspector of Notes. That functionary beamed upon us benignantly, and requested our presence in a private room.

"These notes are rather peculiar," he said.

"Notes of the Bank of England," I replied, 'Promises to pay which cannot be evaded without an act of bankruptcy. I am Pinniger, Town Clerk of Sarum: this gentleman, from Drummonds, can identify me: all I want is change for twenty thousand-pound notes.'

"Perhaps you will not object to say how they came into your possession," says he.

"For two reasons I object," was my answer. 'One, that you have not the slightest right to ask; the other, that I should be guilty of a breach of confidence between attorney and client. You have no right to hesitate about paying those notes unless you suspect them to be stolen: do you suspect them to be stolen?'

"I got the money, divulging nothing; it was not a matter of much import, but I have always declined to be trodden upon by official people."

Next morning, before Mr. Carington went out, Basil Longhurst

came with Pinniger to call on him, and willingly accepted the invitation to Delamere, and promised to take the greatest care of Canon Lovelace.

Thereafter Mr. Carington walked into the Close, stooped his head under the old ivy-covered archway, and knocked at the heavy door. He found the Canon happy enough; a mighty Baskerville classic lay on his knees, and he was making minute marginalia. When Laurence announced

"Mr. Carington!"

he was at first rather perplexed, his memory having been troubled by illness.

The Canon was a younger man than Mr. Carington: yet he had an air of decrepitude, while the other, erect and alert, looked as if he might be thirty. Mr. Carington grasped Canon Lovelace's extended hand, and said,—

"I have come to persuade you that change of air is good for you."

"You are very kind," said the Canon, "but I like this old corner of mine, and don't want to leave it."

"Ah, but this is a great occasion. Your boy and mine, Frank Noel, is going to marry, you know, and he wants you to do the deed for him. You cannot refuse. You must make acquaintance with Elinor Delamere, before she becomes Elinor Noel. A charming girl, Canon Noel: she is almost a daughter to me."

"I will go," said the Canon, "whithersoever it may be. I thanked God for this, when I heard it from Frank. He marries the granddaughter of the man who killed his father. This is well. If I did not love Frank heartily as I do, I should feel it my duty to be with him when such an event happens."

Mr. Carington rode by easy stages northward, going first through Winchester and Guildford to London, where he wanted to purchase some knick-knacks for the young couple. He did not stay to look in at any of the clubs. He pushed on, through Cambridge and Huntingdon, to where the devil looks over Lincoln; thence to Leeds, in whose prosperous streets the grass grows freely, and across by the old route from Lancaster. Everybody was extremely glad when he walked quietly into the Great Hall, one evening, looking just as if he had been away ten minutes. Elinor and Raffaella both threw themselves upon him in a transport of affection.

"Now, girls, don't smother me," he said. "Frank, the Canon is coming to marry you. Pinniger and your friend Longhurst are going to bring him. The doctors say that change will do him good. I shall keep him here as long as possible."

"Have you been to Ford's Farm?" asked Elinor.

"Yes, I have, and everything is in capital form. I shall often come and see you there. I like the old place."

"The oftener the better," says Frank. "We mean to keep a room for you, and make it just what we think you'll like."

"You're a good boy, Frank, and Elinor's a dear girl. You mean every word you say, you love your old friend, who is the most selfish fellow in existence, and never does anybody a kindness except because it gives him pleasure. But by-and-by you will have a lot of little Franks and Elinors and Toms and Pollys running about, and you will want my room as a nursery, and you will think my old stories and borrowed epigrams lamentably dull after the clever things your children say to the nurse who washes them. Why shouldn't the little rascals say cleverer things than I, since they are fresh from God's hand, while I have had half a century with the devil?"

The wedding-day came at last, and June never found a brighter page in her pretty rose-tinged thirty-paged pamphlet.

Canon Lovelace, assisted by the Rev. Basil Longhurst, performed the ceremony. Rupert Fitz-Rupert was there, good-humouredly submitting to the chaff which his utter defeat brought upon him.

Rachette sent up such a wedding-breakfast as I should say England had never known before. Bridesmaids were plentiful and pretty, all the great families of Westmoreland and Cumberland mustered on this occasion. Superb were the bridal gifts; Mr. Carington especially had exhausted his invention on lovely caprices for his Elinor. When an old bachelor meets a girl who might have been (perhaps ought to have been) his daughter, how he loves her! The beautiful true history of Charles Lamb and Isola is a case in point.

Presents! Well, why enumerate them? The Earl's was very unpretentious; sealed envelope,—

"For Elinor,

"Not to be opened till she gets home."

Elinor put it in her pocket, and kissed her grandfather and her father and Mr. Carington, and was helped into the carriage by Frank, half crying and half laughing, but quite happy whether she laughed or cried. She had gone through the service and the breakfast in a kind of dream: but as four horses took the omnibus swiftly toward the station, she seemed to awake, and she drew her husband toward her, and said,—

"O Frank! O darling Frank!"

"You are excited, little pet," says old Frank, quietly. "Rest here."

And he nursed her like a baby, and made her cosy all through the long railway journey; for the excitement had fretted her nerves. But when they got into the soft Devon air, and especially when, after a cross-country drive, they reached Ford's Farm, and sniffed the sea, and found a meal of fresh lobsters, and choice tea, and Devonshire cream,

and Carington claret, served in the Red Parlour, they were perfectly refreshed. At this point we may safely leave them. Perhaps however it may be as well to mention that when Elinor deigned to open her grandfather's envelope, it was found to contain a cheque on the Bank of England for 50,000*l*.

Canon Lovelace remained a few days at Delamere, and he and the Earl became very intimate. You would hardly have thought they had any common measure: the Earl was all impulse, the Canon all principle: but both were gentlemen, and that is the truest freemasonry. The perpetual fleet of language is a curious thing: probably no word has in its time had more meanings than the word *gentleman*; will anybody attempt a definition of the current meaning of that variable word?

It was eventide at Delamere. A place is always a little dull after a bridal. Dinner was over. The Earl went off early. The Marchesa said,—

“O! this great hall is so dreary. Come up to my room, Mr. Carington, and let us gossip a little.”

They went. Tasso received them with multitudinous barks. Rollo, always athirst, rang for something iced.

“Will they be happy, Raffaella?” says Carington.

“Very,” she answered. “He is slow, sweet, strong; he has the best temper in the world, and could be very clever if he tried: but he won't try. As to Elinor, I think she is the finest woman in mind and body, I ever saw.”

“Yet she is very quiet,” said Mr. Carington.

“Why not? The women who are always chattering are not the best. I talk a great deal too much myself. I often wish I were not so fond of the sound of my own voice.”

“Everybody loves the sound of your voice, Raffaella,” says Mr. Carington, as he and Rollo take leave.

But Rollo, when Mr. Carington has gone to the quietude of his own room (Carington always stipulates at country houses that nobody shall ever knock at his door), returns to the apartment of Raffaella Ravioli, and coolly opens the door, and sees the little lady sitting before the fire, with bright eyes looking out of white apparel.

“May I come in, Raffaella?”

“Of course you may.”

“Have you made up your mind, child?” he said in a voice wherein music and laughter were equally blended—“Come, tell me. Do you think you could marry such a troublesome irregular fellow as I am? Tell me.”

“Can't you guess?” said the Marchioness. “Now, Rollo, you are a nuisance with your gravities and suavities. I won't have it. I hate nonsense. You and I are not babies, like Frank and Elinor. Don't pretend you're in love: that's a disease incident to children. You think I shall amuse you, and I know you'll take care of me. Come,

is not that the true state of things? We will marry for fun, and tease each other dreadfully."

"How pleasant!" quoth Rollo, with a melodious laugh, "Have your way, Raffaella. I think I can keep you in tolerable order, wicked little wretch though you are."

"O, I will give you such a lot of trouble. I will make you wish you had married a slave or remained a bachelor. Come, Rollo, confess you are frightened: I will let you off if you ask me politely."

"I don't mean to be let off," said Rollo, therewith taking her up in his arms like a baby, and administering half a dozen kisses. "Now, you have made up your little mind? Or am I to make it up for you?"

"O do, please, Rollo. I can't take so much trouble. I will do what you tell me, exactly."

"Very well, then we'll say the first of July. And we'll spend our honeymoon in Devonshire, and look up Frank and Elinor, who will be tired of each other by that time: Come, Raffaella, sing me a sentimental song."

Raffaella. "With pleasure:

"He said, 'What pretty gay thing
Will come to my arms for a kiss?
I sadly want a plaything:
The toys of my youth I miss.'
She said, 'I am ready to follow
Your steps the wide world through,
But if I'm a plaything, Rollo,
You'll find me a mistress too.'"

"Ho, ho!" he laughed. "So you are going to be a tyrant, are you, lady of Lilliput? We shall see. We shall see."

CHAPTER XLI.

TWELVE YEARS AFTER.

Raphael. When you are young, a decade makes a difference.

Astrologos. When you are old, a decade makes no difference.

Eighty and ninety I consider synonyms:

I have begun to count my age by centuries.

The Comedy of Dreams.

A.D. 1872, 36 Victoriae. It is a lovely August day. The Earl of Delamere and his wife and son have been for a long ride over the fells. Rollo is Earl now. His father died very quietly, with one hand in his son's, and the other grasping that of his old friend Carington. He had lived a strong life, and he died a brave death.

Rollo and Raffaella have one child only, a boy, whom they have called Frank, uniting the name of his two godfathers. He is as tall as his mother already, and is likely to be taller than his father. He has all his father's daring, and all his mother's wonderful wild wit; and will make a good Earl Delamere in days to come. Frank Noel is delighted at his deliverance.

They ride home under the beautiful soft sunset, that wondrous picture painted for us day after day. They enter the great hall. Rollo finds lying on his table a letter from Carington . . . brief enough.

"DEAR ROLLO,

"I am bored in London. People are growing duller. I shall go down to Frank to-day, and in a week or two I shall travel your way. Look to the wine-cellar, you terrible drinker of ale.

"Yours,

"And Raffaella's,

"F. C."

"I shall be glad to see Carington again," said the Earl.

"Ah, and so shall I," cried the Countess-Marchesa. "If *he* had asked me to marry him, sir, you would never have had a chance. Nobody could refuse Mr. Carington."

"Nobody ever seems to have had an opportunity," said Rollo, laughing as musically as of old. "When Carington asks anybody to marry him, the skies will fall, and we shall catch larks."

Frank Delamere, by courtesy Lord Rookwood, is not spoiled. Papa and mamma both pet him: but papa makes him rough it, and mamma laughs him out of his boyish absurdities. He is such a fine manly fellow at ten, that I expect him to be a young giant of the peerage at twenty. A few young giants are needed in that vicinage. Rollo himself is seldom in London: but now and then his musical voice has been heard in the House, from the Tory benches: and Raffaella's exquisite gaiety and romantic history, made everybody eager for invitations to her brilliant little dinners, especially as Mr. Carington was always there.

On this same summer evening, little Lucy Walter, now Lucy Carnac, is waiting in the porch of that very same Avalon cottage, expecting her husband. There came a railway through those parts, and, with the railway, engineers—one of whom, Ralph Carnac, fell in love with Lucy. Lucy was quite ready to be fallen in love with. They married, Lucy's position being previously explained to the engineer, who did not care twopence about it. Carnac got a good permanent appointment on the line, and Lucy presented him with plenty of children, and they lived very happily.

The old earl had not been illiberal. He got Mr. Carington to see Carnac, and ascertain if he could be trusted with money, and

finding this to be the case, he sent him a cheque for a sum that placed him above poverty. Nor was Lucy forgotten in his will.

Let us travel to the south-west on the self-same day. A soft sweet sultry afternoon lies on Ford's Farm. The great red kine, more than knee-deep in rich green grass, seem too lazy to eat. The pulses of the sea upon the marble sand are languid and slow. The sea-gulls are lazy, floating in air with very little fancy for fish. A troop of children, girls and boys, I don't know how many, are rushing about on the strip of green turf which ends in yellow sand and azure sea. Frank Noel, in the porch of his farm, with velvetene coat and gaitered leg, is smoking a cigar: Elinor, looking quite a matron (but a very pretty matron), is doing some fanciful work. The air is full of odour and music. The youngsters laugh and sing: there is a path of light across the sea; there is not the faintest fragment of a cloud in the whole blue canopy of sky.

"I wonder when we shall see Carington again," said Frank.

"Ah, I wonder," replied Elinor. "I wish he would come."

For Mr. Carington is quite as young as ever. He is even a greater authority in London in social matters than in days gone by. He is the Nestor of the clubs and the Cheiron of the turf. From his verdict there is no appeal. As he rides down St. James' Street, or takes his quiet canter in the Row, you would never dream that he and the century were twins. The pretty little belles of the season, who come out one after the other like monthly roses, are still glad to know that Mr. Carington thinks them nice. His epigrammatic opinion on play, picture, poem, has still its value. The men who cluster in bow-windows of White's and Brooks's are apt to say—

"By Jove, old Carington sits a horse and flirts with a woman and shuts up a fool, as well as he did forty years ago."

When he visits Paris he is well received in the faubourg by his old friend the Duc d'Yviesse, who lives *entre cour et jardin*, and has only one trouble—that the Empire substituted extravagance and ostentation for the science and poetry of aristology—and that to restore them, is harder than to bring back the Count de Chambord.

Let us return to Ford's Farm, where still the children are romping, the master smoking, the mistress knitting, under the sunset light. Suddenly the outer gate is opened with a whip-handle, and in rides Mr. Carington, on a bright chestnut this time. He dismounts, gives Elinor a kiss, grasps Frank's strong hand, is besieged by a troop of youngsters.

"We were just talking of you," said Frank. "You are come to stay, I hope."

"About a week," he said. "Then I am promised to Delamere. I have told him that he must take me when I can manage to come: for I live in the saddle now, and have made up my mind never again to enter a railway carriage. It shakes every fibre of one's body. That

